

# Accepted by God

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of experiencing the indestructible life through the power of the Holy Spirit, which involves death to self and the crucifixion of our old man.*

**Duration:** 1:02:53

**Scripture:** Genesis 3:9, Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 51:6, Matthew 6:33, John 1:17, Romans 5:20, Hebrews 8:12

**Topics:** "Accepted"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a passionate and persistent prayer life. He uses two parables from the Bible to illustrate this point. The first parable is about a persistent widow who keeps knocking on the door of a neighbor until she receives what she needs. The preacher encourages believers to have the same level of passion and persistence in their prayers to God. The second parable is about the value of seeking God's face above all else, recognizing that the things of this world are temporary and insignificant compared to the beauty and glory of God. The preacher urges listeners to count everything in this world as rubbish and to prioritize their relationship with God above all else.

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## Transcript

The law was given through Moses and grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. In our last session I mentioned that truth means reality and David said in Psalm 51 verse 6, Lord you desire reality in the innermost being. But he didn't have it.

He was a man after God's own heart but that was only at the level of Old Testament people. We need to understand that to whom more is given more is required. You cannot look at the example of Old Testament people and be satisfied if you live at their standard.

They did not have the power of an indestructible life. It's good to study Old Testament characters. I myself have taken studies at different times in the church on the life of Moses and David and Joseph and Daniel like I mentioned.

We can learn wonderful things from them in many areas but there's one thing that no Old Testament person can teach us not even John the Baptist and that is how to have this indestructible life. If you want to learn that you got to come to Jesus because he's the first person that walked on this earth that demonstrated that indestructible life and he demonstrated it not just for us to admire but to partake of. You

know I tell people in our church if you believe only in admiring Jesus but not partaking of his life then when the bread comes to you at the breaking of bread just look at it admire it and pass it on and when the cup comes to you admire it and pass it on.

Don't drink it. You know what you're testifying when you take part in that bread and drink that cup? I want this life. I want to be broken like Jesus was.

I want to be poured out like Jesus was poured out. The trouble with a lot of Christians is they admire Jesus Christ they don't want to follow him and Jesus never once said admire me. You know the number of times he said follow me.

So make it your passion to follow Jesus. Of course we admire him. He's my hero like these young people in the world have heroes of rock music stars and rock musicians and film stars.

My hero is Jesus Christ and like they want to sing like those rock stars and comb their hair like these film actresses. I want to be like Jesus in every way. I want to speak like him.

I want to live like him. I want to have the same attitude to money and people like he had because he's my hero. Make Jesus your hero and believe that through the Holy Spirit you can live the same life that he lived.

If that is not possible then there's no gospel. I've often thought supposing I were to go to a non-christian and say I want to give you some good news because gospel means good news and you say what's the good news? I say the good news is that all the filthy wretched things you've done in your life, all the crime you've committed, every way you've grieved God, everything that is called sin can be forgiven in a moment. Christ died on the cross to forgive all your sins and in a moment and it's free.

You can never do anything to get that forgiveness. You got to accept it freely. He says that's great.

But then he says I've got one more question before I want to accept this Jesus Christ of yours. Will this Jesus Christ deliver me from anger? I have a problem with that. Will he deliver me from lusting with my eyes? I have a problem with that.

And will he deliver me from the love of money and selfishness and pride and things like that? I say no no he can't help you in all that but he'll forgive your sin. What sort of gospel is that? He'll say keep your Jesus Christ to yourself. I don't want this.

I'm looking for somebody will not only forgive me but deliver me. Do you see where Christians have failed in presenting the gospel? We're so passionate to give the gospel to others. But what gospel? A good news that you'll keep on falling into the muck and keep on committing the same old sins but you can get up and Jesus will clean you up.

And tomorrow you'll fall into the same old muck again and Jesus will clean you up. Is that the gospel? That's the gospel I heard for 16 years in born-again churches I used to go to. Nobody told me that Jesus came to save his people from their sins.

That Jesus could give me a life that could not be destroyed by sin. A life that could not be destroyed by the devil or the lust of the flesh or the lust of the eyes or the pride of life that could overcome. That's the whole message of the resurrection.

See unfortunately Christians are more witnesses of the crucifixion than of the resurrection. Most preaching of the gospel ends with Christ died on the cross. Think of it when you have preached the gospel to other people.

Ask yourself how much emphasis have you placed on Jesus rose from the dead. He conquered sin. He conquered the devil.

He said in John 16 33 I have overcome the world. We don't preach that in the gospel. We tell them Christ died for your sins.

We are witnesses of his crucifixion. Go to a concordance and see if there is even one place where the Apostle said we are witnesses of his crucifixion. Not even once.

They always said we are witnesses of his resurrection. We believe in the crucifixion but the crucifixion is useless without the resurrection. I mean if you're only preaching the crucifixion you might as well preach about the two thieves who hung on the cross.

They were crucified too. What's the difference between those two thieves who were crucified and the one who was crucified in the middle? The resurrection. That's the thing that makes the difference and I believe there needs to be a radical change not only in our preaching the gospel but also in our whole approach to the Christian life.

I am to be a witness of his resurrection. I am to be a witness of the fact that Jesus conquered death. Man's biggest problem is not sex.

It's not alcohol. It's not drugs. It's not prostitution.

It's not money. It is death. Spiritual death which sums up everything and when Jesus conquered death, man's greatest enemy, he was saying that's to prove to you that I can conquer anything.

If you will allow my Holy Spirit to come and take control of your life, it doesn't matter what you're a slave to. You can conquer it. That is resurrection.

Resurrection is a power that lifts us up from death that pulls us down. That is this indestructible life. You know in the Old Testament also people were raised from the dead but they did not get an indestructible life.

Lazarus was raised from the dead but he died again which proved that the life he got after coming out of the grave was a destructible life. Jairus' daughter were raised from the dead. The widow of Nain's son was raised from the dead but they had a destructible life which died again.

All the Old Testament people were raised from the dead. They died again. There was one.

The resurrection of Jesus is not just being raised from the dead. It's another life. That's what he gives to us and that's why the Apostle Paul even at the end of his life said Philippians 3 in verse 10, I want to know him better.

That's my passion. He says there are three passions he had in his life in Philippians 3 10 and he says in order to in order for this in the last part of verse 8 he says I've counted everything as rubbish. He said I count everything in this world as rubbish.

All the wealth of this world offer it to me rubbish. All the good opinions from men rubbish. All the honor this world can give me rubbish.

Nobel Prize or whatever it is rubbish. Do you know what I want? I want to know him verse 10 because to know God as I said yesterday is eternal life. I want to know God better.

I want to know Jesus Christ better and better and better. That's a very intimate relationship it's speaking about. You know in the Old Testament knowing is a word used of the husband-wife relationship.

It says Adam knew his wife and different men there. It says it's the most intimate relationship in the physical realm. It's called knowing and the spiritual equivalent of that the spiritual equivalent of the most intimate of human relationships is the word know that Jesus used when he said this is eternal life that they might know God and Jesus Christ.

I am to have a relationship with Jesus Christ which is so intimate in my spirit like a husband and wife their physical intimacy but a far deeper thing because and when I know Jesus Christ like this like we sing in that song the things of earth will grow strangely dim. We try to overcome the world by fighting it fighting it fighting it that's not the answer. The answer is to know Jesus Christ and the things of earth will grow strangely dim.

There's a poem there's a hymn which I one verse of it which I sung to myself for 30 years just to remind myself of the things that are really valuable. The verse goes like this show me thy face O Lord one transient gleam of loveliness divine and I shall never think or dream of other love save thine. All lesser light will darken quite.

All lower glories wane and the beautiful of earth will never look beautiful again. The beautiful of earth will never look beautiful again whether it's money or pretty women or pretty sights in the world or the beautiful things of earth will never look beautiful again. Once I've seen and got a glimpse show me thy face O Lord one transient gleam of loveliness divine.

Why is it we are frequently tempted by I mean not tempted we will be tempted but we frequently are drawn and fall for the beautiful things of earth. We haven't seen the loveliness in the face of Jesus Christ. Let's face it.

Paul said I want to know him and I want to know the power of his resurrection. He's not talking about that future resurrection from the dead when Christ comes back. He's talking about experiencing the power of resurrection now because I'm experiencing spiritual death now.

The forces of death are pulling me down in my body 24-7. They are pulling me down in my dreams at night. They are pulling me down in my mind when I'm awake and in the passions of my body.

I can't afford to wait for a future resurrection of the body. I want to know the power of his resurrection now that lifts me up from these forces of death that pull me down. I want to know the power of this indestructible life that Jesus manifested on earth and proved by his resurrection.

The resurrection was proof that Jesus life was an indestructible life. Death could not hold him the Bible says. Isn't it amazing that the Lord offers me that life.

These are the true riches. The Lord says give me your garbage and I'll give you my resurrection life and Paul saw the value of that and said I want the power of his resurrection. But you say Paul haven't you already experienced that quite a bit in your life.

Yes but I want to know more. There's no end to knowing God. There's no end to knowing the power of his resurrection.

Like I said yesterday God will give you what you value and long for. Many times people ask me why does God make us ask and ask and ask and ask for something and doesn't give us you know first time we ask. He said that if earthly fathers know how to give good things to their children how much more shall your heavenly father give good things to those who ask him or give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

And our father he used the illustration of a child asking a father for bread. Well how often does your son have to ask you for bread. He doesn't have to keep on pleading mom give me bread give me bread once.

Very often even before he asks you give him his food. But that's only one aspect of truth. That God is more eager to give us this indestructible life, this fullness of the Holy Spirit, the divine nature than we are to have it.

But the other aspect of truth you know you can't contain the whole of truth in one illustration. Every parable and every illustration in the Bible is limited. It shows you one aspect of truth like the rainbow with many colors.

There's red in the rainbow there's green in the rainbow but that's not everything. To get the full rainbow you got to have many colors to get all of God's truth. You got to put all these things together.

And so when Jesus spoke about coming to God in prayer he used the example of a child asking a father for bread. How much more your heavenly father will give good or the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. But then he also spoke about the widow who went on knocking at the door of the judge saying give me justice against my enemy.

Don't let the devil have power over me. And she had to keep on asking till she got it. That's the other another color in the rainbow.

So if you get taken up with just one color and you don't get an answer to prayer you know why. There's something more in truth. He used the other example of the man who went to his neighbor's house and kept on knocking till he got bread for a visitor who was in need.

Teaching us that if you want the power of the Holy Spirit first of all be concerned about the need of other people around you. I mean if that man in that parable in Luke 11 and this visitor comes to him at midnight, his friend. And supposing he had said to him, well there's no food in the fridge and there's no food in my house.

I'm sorry I've already eaten. I didn't know you were coming. Let's go to bed.

I'll try and get you some breakfast in the morning. He'd have gone to bed. But he loved him so much the man had come after a long journey, tired, hungry.

He said I'm gonna get bread for you. Even if it means embarrassing myself with my neighbor and knocking even when the neighbor says shut up and don't disturb me I still keep on knocking until I get it. That's the

type of passion Jesus said we must have when we go to God in prayer.

Lord I'm not gonna give up until you give me these two parables. One is justice against my enemy that the devil has no more power over me. I picture that widow like a poor helpless widow.

She didn't have any male member in her house otherwise she'd have sent her son or to the judge. She probably didn't even have a daughter. She was a helpless widow who had to go herself.

An old lady who had to go herself to the judge. This is the picture Jesus used of the church. Jesus always used pictures of the church as weak and helpless widow.

He another place he said you're like lambs, sheep in the midst of wolves. He's always he used the picture of helplessness because he doesn't want us to trust in our own ability. The more helpless you recognize yourself to be the more you are the type of Christian that God wants you to be.

Are you helpless against the sins that overcome you and overpower you? Brother you're a candidate for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. But do you recognize it? Do you recognize that you cannot overcome on yourself? Do you recognize that I'm unable? I'm like a widow with this powerful neighbor of mine who is encroaching into my property little by little by little. He thinks that this poor widow can't do anything.

I'll take over. I'll take over. I'd gradually crush her out of this and occupy her whole land.

That's how the devil seeks to occupy our life little by little by little by little and we see him possessing more and more of our life. We're helpless. What should we do? Foolish to try and fight the devil ourselves.

Imagine if this widow tried to fight this powerful neighbor. Maybe he's an attorney who's got a lot of ability who can bribe the judge etc. She's got no hope.

We got to go to God. Say Lord if you're on my side I don't care who's against me. That's the picture and you got to go persistently.

Lord I have no help in myself but I believe you're going to help me. That's the way we get power. The power to overcome the devil, overcome the world, overcome every bad habit that the devil's put on us, every wretched thing we've inherited from Adam.

I want to tell you I don't care what you are a slave to. I want to tell you today in Jesus name you can overcome it. The Holy Spirit has come to give you that.

The power of an indestructible life. Paul wanted it. He said I want to know more and more of the power of his resurrection and the third thing he said here was to know him, to know the power of his resurrection.

Philippians 3.10 the fellowship of his sufferings being conformed to his death. That's not something we usually have a passion to know more of but we have to recognize one thing that in a world subsequent to Adam's fall there was no suffering or sacrifice required in Genesis 2. But the moment Adam fell the Lord put a sword, a flaming sword in front of the tree of life as it were saying from now on anybody who wants to come to the tree of life has got to have the sword fall upon his self life. It involves suffering, it involves sacrifice.

It wasn't there before sin came into the world and interestingly the Lord never put that flaming sword in front of the tree of knowledge as it were telling people if all you want is Bible knowledge you don't need to

die to yourself brother. You can accumulate as much knowledge as you want of good and evil without any death to self. But if you want life, if you want this indestructible life you have to allow the sword to fall upon you.

The same sword that fell on Jesus on Calvary not only was he crucified Paul discovered this wonderful truth that I am crucified with Christ. Whether you knew it or not that's what you testified to in baptism. My old man is crucified with him and it's buried.

That's the meaning of baptism. I'm buried with Christ, I'm raised up with him. It's an amazing truth, it's a wonderful truth.

I believe it's the whole secret of the overcoming life to share in his death because it's a death to all that is rotten and all that is from Adam. What the Bible sums up as the old man. I finished with it.

I want to die and Paul says I want to know that more and more in my life because I carry a flesh around with me which I will have until I die or until Christ comes and if I belong to Christ I have to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. So that's the third thing he says I want to know the fellowship of his sufferings being conformable to his death. And I believe that's another thing which the devil has succeeded in removing from Christian preaching.

The way of the cross, the way of death to self. Because as long as you don't understand this, as long as you are not willing to accept death to self, you can talk and hear about the indestructible life till all eternity, you'll never get there. Because there's something in us which we must be willing to put to death in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me show you in Romans chapter 8. In Romans 8 and verse 13 it says very beautifully expressed in the, he says you have two options. Romans 8 13 if you live according to the flesh that's one option, you will die. There's no doubt about it.

You will die spiritually. Dying physically is true of everybody. You don't have to live according to the flesh, you just die.

But here he's talking about spiritual death. If you live according to the flesh, that means you live according to the dictates of your self-life, you will die. And those of us who've been living according to the dictates of our self-life, we are experiencing spiritual death.

But the other alternative is the glorious alternative. If by the power of the Holy Spirit, let's read slowly, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in other words I can't do it myself, number one truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit I can't do it myself, you put to death. The second truth, the Holy Spirit won't do it, you gotta do it.

If it was the Holy Spirit's job to put to death everything in our flesh, we would all become like Christ ages ago, because he doesn't fail in his job. These are two mistakes that Christians have made. I've heard both.

One is living under the law, where we struggle, struggle, struggle, grit our teeth and discipline ourselves and somehow overcome. That's the teaching of yoga and Buddhism, where you control your anger. I remember a brother who came to our church, he was non-christian, he said I overcame anger with yoga long before I ever knew anything about Jesus Christ.

What does he mean? Not anger inside, he was boiling inside, but he learned how to grit his teeth, keep his mouth shut. That's not overcoming, that's just hypocrisy. The other extreme is a lot of teaching which is very popular in a lot of Christian circles and sometimes propounded by great teachers.

If I mention their names, you'll be surprised. Some whom you respect very highly, I won't mention their names. They say, you don't have to do anything.

Christ is your patience, Christ is your life, just accept it. You don't have to do anything, he'll do it all. That is the opposite cliff of error.

He's not gonna do it all. I'll tell you why. If he were going to do it all, why has he failed so miserably in all of us? How many of us have become like Christ? Is it because Jesus has failed? If he's doing it all, here's the balance.

If you, through the Holy Spirit, put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. That's a promise. That's the promise of God, I will live with an indestructible life.

If I agree with the Holy Spirit, Lord, you've given me the power, I'm gonna do it. You're not gonna do everything. I don't know how it's in India, how it's here.

In India, when we build a new building, a new house, you got to apply to the electricity board office in the city to get an electric power connection. And then they come and give you, from the electric pole on the street, they give you an electric power connection and put an electric meter there. But you can't call them and say, will you come and please put on the switch for me? They're not gonna do that.

You got to put on the switch yourself. They've given you the power, but you got to plug in your washing machine or your dishwasher or your computer. You can't ask those fellows to come and do that.

You see, we give you the power. Now you connect to that and use it as you like. Here's another guy who is in his house who got a hundred and one gadgets running perfectly, making life much easier.

Here's another lazy fellow who's waiting for the electricity office to come and plug in his dishwasher and dishwashing and washing machine and nothing happens. Now we're not so foolish. God gives you the power, so now you use it.

If you, through the Holy Spirit, put to death the deeds of the body, that other person who's got all his gadgets working, he's using the power which the electricity office gave him. You can also use it. If you, through the Spirit, put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

So let's turn back to what I said earlier about grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. Reality came through Christ and grace. This is a New Testament word, grace.

It's different from mercy. Mercy is an Old Testament word which means the forgiveness of our past sins. Grace is a New Testament word and I want to tell you some of the things that grace can do in our life.

It's important to know this because this is how God brings us into this resurrection life. Romans chapter 5, first of all, it speaks here about having, Romans 5 and verse 2, having obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand. That's the first thing we need to know about the grace of God, that we are accepted by God completely.

Like it says in verse 5, verse 1 rather, justified by faith we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand. I stand before God, like it says in verse 1, justified. That means just as if I'd never sinned.

Completely righteous in God's eyes, totally accepted. This is the first step in grace and it's amazing how the devil keeps so many people, so many really born-again believers, perpetually unsure whether God is delighted with them or not. I know in my own life, I always thought the spiritual thing was to always feel that God was frowning at me.

How many of you feel like that? To be spiritual is to always think God's angry with you a little bit. I always used to feel like that for years and I thought that was normal, that I should never be so proud as to think that God's happy with me. That's pride.

Humility is always to think that God's a little bit angry with me because there's something wrong with me all the time. It's not true. It's a lie of the devil under which I suffered for years and if you're suffering with that, listening to that lie of the devil, I want you to be free from it.

To know that you've been accepted. There's a lovely expression in Ephesians 1 and verse 3 in the King James Bible. It says like this in Ephesians 1, 3. Accepted in the beloved.

We've been accepted in the beloved. Accepted. Ephesians 1, verse 3 and 4. Accepted in the beloved.

We've been accepted by God. We are accepted before Him. So why do I emphasize that? Because I believe that many believers suffer under the feeling there's something in me which I'm not happy with.

There's something in me that God's not happy with. I must first of all accept the way God has made me and I must believe that God has accepted me as I am. It's not because we are perfect.

There's no one perfect when they come to Christ. We know that. God has accepted us just as we are.

There's a song we sing. Jesus take me as I am. I can come no other way.

I cannot come any other way. Just take me as I am. And He takes us as I am.

Just as I am without one plea. But that thy blood was shed for me. This is so very important.

I want to ask every one of you who is here two questions. Have you totally accepted the way God made you? Totally. Do you believe God made no mistake in the physical shape He gave you? The color of your skin? Your height and weight? And there's so many people are unhappy with some things in their life.

So why did you give me such parents? Why did you give me that upbringing? Why did you allow me to be born into that family? Why did you allow me to be born with the tendency to become fat? These things are all earthly things. Once you finish with and say Lord I'm not comparing myself with other people. I have no complaint about the features you gave me.

The color of skin you gave me. The genes in my body which make me fat or thin or tall or short. I have no complaint.

I accept that you wove me in my mother's womb. It wasn't the devil who wove me in my mother's womb. It was God Almighty who wove me in my mother's womb.

I'll tell you something. It makes a tremendous difference in your life. Let me show you that verse in Psalm 139 which David says about his own conception in his mother's womb.

I find lots and lots of believers need to believe this with all their heart. It will deliver them from comparing themselves with others. It will deliver them from dissatisfaction with themselves.

Now these are hindrances to our coming into this resurrection indestructible life. Because if I have a little little bit of a complaint against God you know about something the way I was made or the way I was brought up or something. That's going to be a hindrance.

It hinders faith. See faith is to believe that God is sovereign. That God is in control of everything and He determined everything about my life.

So let me read to you in Psalm 139. Verse 13. Lord you formed my inward parts and you wove me in my mother's womb.

He was the one who shaped your face and determined the color of your skin and determined the type of genes that you have. That the intelligence you have and so many things. You know you could wish sometimes I wish I was more intelligent like that guy.

I'd be earning a better bigger salary or I wish I'd my children my parents had brought me up in a different way or given me a better education so that I could earn more money. Or I wish I was born in some rich family where I could get an inheritance and a ready-made wealth. Decide once and for all that God has made absolutely no mistake in the family he allowed you to be born in.

In the shape of your body in the world for example particularly with women. There's so much emphasis nowadays on having a nice slim figure that's attractive. It's almost as though if you become fat you're a criminal or like that it's all a lie of the devil.

If you listen to all that the world and the devil say you'll always be discouraged and you'll have a little secret complaint against God. Why did you make me like this? You got to come to rest on that completely. I tell you it's really got to do with the Christian life.

To believe that God wove me in my mother's womb and that one day when I see him face-to-face I will know the answer why he made me the way I am. Not talking about sin. Sin we inherited from Adam but the physical part of me my intelligence everything was determined by God and I'm perfectly happy the way he made me.

I have no complaints. Absolutely none. I will give thanks to thee.

Verse 14 because you have I'm wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works. My soul knows it very well.

Can you say that? Can you look at your intelligence, your physical qualities or what you think is a lack of physical qualities. The home you were brought up in, the mother in whose womb you were woven by God, your surroundings and all that. Everything other than sin.

Say Lord your works are wonderful. I believe there are Christians who've never once in their whole life thanked God for the way God made them. Lord I thank you.

There may be things which other people in the world don't appreciate but I believe you made me exactly the way I'm supposed to be. I have no complaint about it at all. I remember I started losing my hair when I was about 23 years old and I wasn't married and that disturbs you even more when you get bald before you get married but I started thanking God.

I said well now nobody will marry me for my good looks. They'll only because I don't have any but if somebody marries me only because of spiritual values. Great! It'll be a spiritual marriage now not because of physical attractiveness.

There's something good in everything which you think is negative. So God and I never complained. I really say I thank the Lord for it and one of the advantages I had those days was you know I was God gave me a gift of preaching when I was 22 years old so I'd get up in these big conferences 23 years old there were 5,000 people there and I'd be speaking and God had given me an anointing of the Holy Spirit to speak but because I was balding like anything they thought I was 35 and they would listen to me if they knew I was only 23 they'd say oh we're not gonna listen.

So God had a plan in everything and I praise the Lord for it.

What I want to say is sometimes you may understand the reason for it now sometimes you may understand it only later but learn to give thanks for every part of your physical life the way you were brought up I'm so thankful I was born in India I know that and you got to be thankful where you're born I'm not saying you can't go to another country my point is be thankful for all the circumstances of your life be thankful for every part of the way God made you and say Lord all this complaining I finished with today never again I'm not going to be affected by what the world thinks I should be like or how slim I should be or how attractive I should be no this is the way you made me and I accepted the intelligence you gave me I couldn't get all the degrees that somebody else got that's fine you

had some other plan for me Peter couldn't get all the degrees that Paul got so what God used both of them equally there's no God doesn't want all that ability in order to serve him Peter says that when I read some of Paul's episodes I can't even understand what the guy is saying doesn't matter he was a fisherman he wasn't a scholar he says that in 2nd Peter chapter 3 you read it some difficult things Paul says he's humble enough to acknowledge it and Paul's much younger than him by the way he says that's great he says some people twist it and so I believe that God uses both type of people that's the first thing the second thing in terms of acceptance is to be absolutely sure that God has accepted you that your sins all your past sins are blotted out have you got this a reminder that comes

to your mind son every now and then about some sin you committed ten years ago not the little lies you said but some terrible sin think of the worst sin you ever committed in your life that's the one the devil keeps reminding you about because he knows he can harass you with that he won't tell you about the little ones because he knows you won't be bothered by that but there's some terrible thing you did maybe something which nobody knows about but you and the devil keeps reminding you reminding you to harass you and harass you as you got to finish it you got to believe that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin it's not it's an insult to God to say that the blood of Jesus cleanses me from small sins but not the big ones look at this lovely verse in Romans chapter 5 you see this is

so important to lay a foundation before we really come into this resurrection life Romans chapter 5 verse 20 where the last part where sin increased grace abounded all the more where sin increased grace abounded all the more do you believe that the grace of God has gone beyond way beyond all the sins you

committed in your life including the that big one that the devil keeps reminding you of it's cleansed in the blood of Christ it's gone and on top of that we have this promise in Hebrews chapter 8 this looks like very elementary kindergarten stuff but I found that a lot of believers didn't study their kindergarten lessons properly and they need to be reminded of it many many years after they got into school Hebrews 8 12 the Lord says I will be merciful to their iniquities I will remember

their sins no more I'll never forget I was baptized I was born again in 1959 exactly 50 years ago and I was baptized in January 1961 but I still was being reminded of old sins yeah maybe the Lord hasn't forgiven that well you know the devil's a master at harassing a person who doesn't know the scriptures I remember the place I was standing on a ship out in the middle of the sea somewhere and suddenly it hit me this verse as if the Holy Spirit brought it to my mind I'll never forget that day I will remember your sins no more it wasn't a voice from heaven it was just this verse coming back to my mind which I had read so many times and I knew it had gone can you take that verse today and say Lord that settles it now I'm not going to allow the devil to harass me anymore concerning anything in

my past I've confessed it if I've confessed it twice I've confessed it once too often you need to confess God only once did you understand that if you confess it twice to God you confessed it to too often confess to God once because he's got good hearing and he's got a good memory you don't have to tell him a second time if you really repented and really turn from it say Lord I that's my if you're blaming somebody else then you better go and confess it even a thousandth time that's the trouble with Adam and God said did you do this did you eat of this tree he said my wife the problem is with her well then you won't be forgiven but if you can stop blaming other people and like a thief on the cross say it's my fault I deserve this you be forgiven immediately and you can enter paradise if

you die that moment this is the wonderful thing about the gospel God forgives people immediately when they take the blame completely themselves I don't mean 99% 100% every sin where you take the blame 100% you'll be forgiven immediately but you tell your wife you provoked me and that's why I got angry brother you will not be forgiven because you're like Adam be like the thief on the cross and say he's got nothing to do with you he's got to do with my corrupt nature take the blame completely you'll be forgiven immediately it's a great secret in the Christian life have you heard that story of the king who went to maybe I've said it here before but it's worth repeating the king who went on his birthday to release as a birthday gift he wanted to release the prisoners from jail from the prison

but he decided to go and talk to the prisoners first before releasing them he went to the different people and he asked why you here and everybody had an excuse I didn't really commit to the crime you know the judge had something against me or it's another fellow says the police got the wrong fellow and somebody else's I look like the criminal and I didn't do it and everybody was blaming somebody else finally went to the last cell why are you here I'm a criminal I don't blame my parents for the way they brought me up I don't blame anybody I did something wrong and I deserve this so the king told the jailer release that man all the people are here are so good that this bad man will corrupt all of them you better send him away open the door and send him go which criminal are you like the

one who's blaming your parents circumstances your wife your husband this provocation that provocation I had a bad day in the office that's why I lost my temper today brother you better stay in jail but the other one who says Lord I can't blame anybody but myself it's my corrupt nature I tell you brother in Jesus name you will come to deliverance very quickly it's so important your sins can be blotted out if you take the blame yourself the moment you blame somebody else you got to wait the Lord waits until you have

learned to say it's me and nobody else and your sin will all be forgiven whatever filthy habit you have don't blame your circumstances don't blame people don't say somebody else led you into that bad habit you your corrupt nature did it take the responsibility 100% yourself and

in future in the Christian life whenever you sin don't ever blame anybody else Lord it's me why didn't if I got grace from God I would have overcome no matter how great the provocation do you think Jesus was not provoked by others in his life people provoked him all around the devil was after him day and night demons were after him how is it he overcame because he received grace from his father and if you receive grace from your father no provocation no human being can ever make you sin I believe that with all my heart that's the first step we must believe that God accepted us we've acknowledged the blame we've come to God and say Lord I'm the guilty person I don't blame anybody else thank you for forgiving me thank you for dying for me my dear brothers and sisters I plead with you in

Jesus name please build your life on this foundation I know the I know the radical change it brought in my life when I placed my life on this foundation Lord I will never again blame anybody else when I fall into sin I will never blame my circumstances I'll never blame provocations I'll never blame anybody except myself then God says at last you come to reality you come to face the truth I'll forgive you and I'll give you victory in your life so that's the first thing that grace does once we have found ourselves being accepted by God that he rejoices over me I love this verse in the Old Testament it's one of the most beautiful verses in the book of Zephaniah in the Old Testament I hope you know where that is the fourth book from the end of the Old Testament Zephaniah chapter 3 and verse

17 it's a lovely verse I wonder if there's another verse like this anywhere else in the scripture and that's why I pick up this one the Lord your God in your midst exalts over you with joy exalt is more than rejoice exalt is like leaping you know it's like you went to the office one day and you heard that your salary is going to be tripled that's exalting your salary is going to be tripled exalting with joy or think of a married woman who's not had children for 20 years barren and one day she becomes pregnant and delivers a baby the exalting or someone who's had 10 miscarriages and then at last a baby is born the exalting we can use different pictures it's a it's a wonderful word exalts I want to ask you do you believe that your Heavenly Father exalts over you when you read a verse like

this that the Lord your God exalts over you you look around say who's the exalting or can't be me I can't possibly be me it is you brother it's you sister because you chose Jesus Christ he exalts over you rejoice in it don't let the devil rob you of this joy the fact that your Heavenly Father exalts over you okay can you picture this mother who had 10 miscarriages who finally has a baby and as she holds that baby in her hand can you picture her eyes that's the way God looks at me that's the way God looks at you do you believe that it'll change your life if you believe it I'm not telling you stories it's not a sales talk I'm reading your scripture he exalts over you with joy and the next sentence the paraphrase of it is he is silently planning for you the word quiet means silently planning

for you in love that this mother this father picks up this child he's never had a child for 20 years he suddenly had this baby and he's already silently started planning for this baby in love what I'm gonna how I'm gonna train this little son of mine or this little daughter of mine the clothes I'm gonna get her and the things I'm gonna do for her and this that and the other it's already planning that's how God is I rejoice in this verse it's one of my favorite verses my Heavenly Father exalts over me and he's silently planning wonderful things for me in love he's got pleasant surprises we for me around the corner there may be some terrible things that happen to me in the world but there's nothing that's going to take my God by

surprise many times in my life I face situations which I said

boy I never expected that to happen you know people have tried to trouble me and hurt me and take me to court I never expect all those things but I find my comfort in the fact that nothing takes my father by surprise nothing he knew it long before I was born that on a particular day and a particular time in my life I would face this unexpected event and he's already made a provision for it to save me from it he's silently planning for you in love we must find our acceptance in such a loving father I never get tired of talking about the love of our Heavenly Father because I believe that so many Christians their fundamental problem why they never come to a life of victory is because somehow the devil robs them of that security that there is in their Heavenly Father you know I've seen this

in orphans in India we have a lot of orphanages and I've seen children who come out of orphanages even if they are 50 years old you still they still behave like orphans insecure feeling always threatened by others if two people are talking together they are convinced they're talking about them only insecure orphans and then I see people children who have grown up the security of a Heavenly Father who've been hugged and kissed so many times by their parents from childhood they are so secure there's a lot of difference and you can be one of these two you can be a child who never feels God hugs you and kisses you if you are you can be like one who an absent father and mother and a lot of most Christians I have met I'll tell you when I look at their life they got every mark of orphans the

orphan syndrome is written there all across their life insecurity their competitive spirit and jealousy of others and everything is because they're insecure that's why I say this is so important to find our acceptance in God it's so fundamental it's so important to be absolutely sure that I've been accepted by my Heavenly Father my sins have all been forgiven God loves me as he loved Jesus I'm his I'm secure in that I've been accepted if I'm clear on this then I can move to the next step in grace which we read in Romans 6 14 so the first thing I told you in Romans chapter 5 is that we have in verse 2 we have an introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand we must stand there and no devil or demon in hell should be able to shake us from it it's a firm foundation then we come to

Romans 6 14 an equally strong promise it's not might not sin may not or might not know sin shall not be master over you because you're under grace it's a tremendous promise that when I come under this waterfall of grace sin cannot rule over me it may have ruled over me for ages but if I come under the waterfall of grace sin cannot rule over me that's written in the Bible for 2,000 years and those who have dared to trust God have experienced it those who imagine won't work for me it doesn't work for them I keep using the story of the two blind men who came to Jesus for healing and Jesus asked him a question do you believe I can do this for you and if one blind man had said Lord I believe you can open at least one eye the Lord would have said according to your faith be it unto you he'd have

gone out with one eye open and he asked the second blind man do you believe I can do this for you the Lord said and he's a sure both eyes according to your faith be it unto you he goes out with both eyes open this is how Christians are one eye is forgiveness of sins and the other eyes overcoming sin you can have one eye open or two eyes that's up to you it's according to your faith not according to your desire remember many people say I've got a great desire great but it's not going to be according to your desire it's going to be according to your faith not according to God's desire either when it says that in Capernaum Jesus hometown where he was living or Nazareth or wherever it was that it refers to he could not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief that's the last verse

of Matthew 13 did they have a desire for a miracle sure did Jesus have a desire to do a miracle for them sure why couldn't he do it they had a desire Jesus had a desire then why couldn't he do it they wouldn't believe that's all now apply that to your situation you have a desire for something to be done in your life to overcome a habit a sin that's plaguing you that you're ashamed of that you don't want other people to know about Jesus has a desire to deliver you from it also that's the good news but it won't happen because you don't believe he'll do it for you you don't believe that he's capable you believe your sin is more powerful than Almighty God that was a trouble with the Israelites when they came to the borders of Canaan oh these Giants are so big we're like grasshoppers and

Joshua and Caleb two people out of 600,000 said that's fine these grass these Giants are like grasshoppers compared to our God that's we can look at sin in two ways some terrible sins that we've been slaves to maybe anger or lust or whatever it is and it looks such like a huge giant you say boy I can never conquer this this giant knocks me down every single time I'm like a little grasshopper he just crushes me under his foot well we can have the faith of Joshua and Caleb and say that's fine but he's not greater than God Almighty God is on my side and if I come under this waterfall of grace and humble myself sin will not rule over me let's have that faith God will lead us not only into being accepted but to being an overcomer God waits for us to trust him that's why it says in Hebrews 11 6

without faith it is impossible to please God what a simple thing he asks of us trust me trust me I can deliver you trust me believe in me at least today that I can set you free from whatever is enslaving you it may take time I know some habits in my life it took years to get over it but it was like climbing a mountain I didn't reach the peak in a moment some sins like that it goes you know there are people who say some bad habit and one day Jesus delivered completely okay maybe it is like that with some people but for some people it's a battle but you're reaching the peak little by little and the Lord delivers you completely and one day you're free but I want to say this be sure of one thing there is no sin in your life no bad habit in your life that Jesus cannot deliver you from

completely he can deliver you from everything from every bad habit by grace if we can believe that the Lord can lead us into that we'll talk more about that later let's pray so first of all the first thing that we spoke about just stop for a moment and ask yourself are you absolutely have you accepted the way God made you are you convinced that you are accepted by God your sins are forgiven that's got to be the foundation on which you stand the grace in which you stand there's the first step in grace then we can go to the second and say Lord I'm not ever going to blame anybody else for my sin it's 100% my fault and I ask you to have mercy on me show me grace that I'll be completely free will you say like that father of the demon-possessed boy Lord help my unbelief help me to trust you I

don't have much faith Lord help my unbelief and you know he got deliverance for his child even when we prayed like that that's a great encouragement you don't have to be strong in faith just come to the Lord and say Lord help my unbelief help me he will do it for you trust him today Heavenly Father we believe you have wonderful things in store for us because we are your children it is not your will that we should continue to dishonor you by a defeated life on this earth you want us to be overcomers and we believe we can be help us each one to trust you for that in Jesus name Amen

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