

Being a Witness to Satan

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of humility and spiritual revelation in being a true witness for Christ, particularly in the eyes of spiritual forces like Satan.

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Scripture: Psalm 37:25, Matthew 11:25, Ephesians 3:9, Ephesians 5:18, Philippians 2:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 13:5, James 5:16

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Righteous Living"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's wisdom and understanding the mystery hidden in God, which is now revealed through the Holy Spirit. It challenges Christians to seek God in their spirit, not just with their minds, and to know God deeply through humility and seeking His interests above their own. The sermon highlights the significance of being a righteous person, content with what God provides, and being filled with the Holy Spirit to live a life that is a testimony before Satan and glorifies God.

Transcript

There is an aspect of our witness for Christ, which many Christians don't often think about. And I want to read in Ephesians in chapter 3 to look at that particular aspect. I've come to see through many, many years that most Christians do not read the Bible very carefully or exactly.

So, they can miss out on what God wants to speak to them. So, I want you as you listen to consider whether you have noticed these verses. It speaks here about a mystery in verse 9. Paul says that he was given grace in verse 8 to preach and to bring to light, verse 9, Ephesians 3, 9, a mystery which is hidden in God for many ages.

Now, the word mystery, by the way, is never found in the Old Testament. There were no mysteries in the Old Testament. Everything was plain and simple for people to understand.

The law, you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery and many, many laws that God gave. If you had good mind and intelligence, you could understand it. And there were clever scribes among the Jews who could explain those scriptures to people.

But when it comes to the New Testament, you find this word mystery. Mystery means a secret and it says here it was hidden in God for many ages. And, but it has now been revealed through the Holy Spirit.

So, the only way to understand something hidden in God is in our spirit. Man was made in the image of God. And like God is a trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

One Thessalonians 5.23 says, man is also a trinity of, not trinity in three persons like God, but trinity in three parts. Body, soul and spirit. And our mind is a part of our soul.

And the great tragedy is that most people try to understand God with their mind. But the mind is good for earthly things, to understand earthly things. But if you want to understand the things of God, you can only understand it in the spirit.

And many people do not know how to know God in the spirit. And the reason for so much of defeat and hypocrisy in Christians is because they do not know God in the spirit. They know God in their mind.

And to know God in the mind, you do not need the Holy Spirit, by the way. If you want to understand the Bible, you don't need the Holy Spirit. You go to a college, you can get a degree in chemistry or science or the Bible.

You just need a good mind. If you don't have a good mind, you won't get a degree in chemistry or physics or in the Bible. Because people try to understand the Bible with their mind, they can't understand the mysteries of God.

The mystery of God is revealed in our spirit and you need the Holy Spirit to show that to you. So before I proceed further there, I want to show you a verse in Matthew chapter 11. You know, verses that you never find in the Old Testament.

You could understand the Old Testament in the mind. You did not need the spirit to understand the Old Testament. No person in the Old Testament had the Holy Spirit dwelling inside him.

Not Moses, not David, not John the Baptist. They had the Holy Spirit upon them, but not inside them. And that is the significance of the veil that was in the tabernacle and later on in the temple between the holy place and the most holy place.

If you read about the tabernacle, the tabernacle that Moses constructed was also a trinity, three parts. And it is a picture of man, body, soul and spirit. The outer court of the tabernacle is a picture of man's body, which everybody could see.

And there were two hidden parts of the tabernacle covered by a tent. Just like there are two hidden parts in man, soul and spirit. And between these two was this thick curtain.

And nobody could go in there. And God dwelt there. God did not dwell in the outer court, not in the body.

God did not dwell in the holy place, symbolizing the soul. God dwelt in the deepest part, the spirit. That's where the fire of God, the glory of God was.

There's meaning in all this symbolism, teaching us that God cannot dwell in our body or in our minds, in our spirit, that he dwells. And he could not dwell in man as long as there was this veil. And when Jesus died, that veil was rent into two.

Then God could dwell in man's spirit. Then man could understand things, which he could never understand with his mind. So in Matthew 11, verse 25, you read these words.

Matthew 11, verse 25. At that time Jesus answered and said, I praise Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou didst hide these things from the clever and the intelligent and revealed them to babes. Have you ever thought, is there any book in the world which babes can understand, but clever and intelligent people cannot understand? Think of it.

Any type of book on any subject, mathematics, history, any science, a book which only babes can understand, but clever and intelligent people cannot understand. Have you ever thought of this verse? Is it possible to have such a writing that only babes can understand and clever people cannot understand? But Jesus said that the Father has hidden some truths from clever, intelligent people and revealed them to babes. Father, because it was well pleasing in Thy sight.

Now you never read this in the Old Testament. Because the Old Testament was understood by clever, intelligent people. The Jewish scribes were very clever and very intelligent.

And you could understand it clearly. What do babes have, which clever, intelligent people usually don't have? Jesus Himself explained that. He took a baby once in His arms and said, if you humble yourself like this child, you can enter into the kingdom of heaven.

All that the Israelites had was the kingdom of earth. If you want to enter the kingdom of heaven, the greatest person in heaven is not a clever person or an intelligent person or a rich person. It's one who is like a baby.

So babies have something which clever, intelligent people usually don't have and that is humility. It's very difficult to find a clever, intelligent person who is extremely humble. I mean, they have a superficial humility because it's rude to act proud.

So they act humble. I'm not talking about that type of hypocrisy, hypocritical humility. I'm talking about that genuine humility which you see in a child.

It's very rare. If a clever, intelligent person has it, it must be because Christ has done a work in him. Otherwise it's impossible.

That's also the reason why Jesus said it's very difficult for a rich man to enter into God's kingdom. Because most rich people are proud. It's true.

They look down on people who are not so smart and clever as they are or not as wealthy as they are and that attitude itself hinders them from getting into the kingdom of God. Those are the words of Jesus. So, if you want to understand the Old Testament, you did not need humility.

All you needed to be was clever and intelligence. But if you want to understand the mysteries written in the New Testament, you require something else which is a quality of the spirit, not of the soul. Something that comes inside the veil.

That's humility. Anyone who dwells in the most holy place, in God's presence, will automatically be humble. It's impossible to dwell in God's presence and be proud.

Absolutely impossible. I mean, can you imagine living in the presence of almighty God and becoming proud? It's completely out of the question. Every man who is proud of anything, whether his intelligence or his wealth or his Bible knowledge or his spiritual gifts or how much he has accomplished for God, all such

people are not dwelling in God's presence.

They are dwelling in the outer court mostly. You cannot dwell inside the veil in God's presence and not be humble. The secret of humility is to live in God's presence.

As God is so almighty, you feel yourself like a small worm or a speck of dust. How can you ever be proud in God's presence? It is impossible. And that's why he said these things are revealed to babes.

You see a word used there which is also a unique New Testament word, reveal. In the Old Testament, you don't read about revelation. You read about understanding.

You read about knowledge. You read words like knowledge, understanding. Those are words you can use to study chemistry or mathematics, knowledge, understanding.

But when you talk about mathematics or chemistry, you don't talk about revelation. No, in colleges, they don't teach revelation. They give you understanding and knowledge.

So, in the Old Testament, you have words like understanding and knowledge and that is for clever, intelligent people. When you come to the New Testament, it's for babes. It's by revelation.

God revealing something in a man's spirit that goes beyond his mind. That's why when, I mean, here's an example of it. When Jesus came to earth, there were great scholars who had studied the Bible.

The Bible those days was 39 books from Genesis to Malachi. Studied it, studied it. They read it every Sabbath day.

You know, they didn't have Bibles like this. But in the synagogue, they had the scroll and they would read it. And all the 39 books spoke about the coming Messiah.

Right from Genesis, it spoke about the seed of the woman and the Passover lamb in Exodus, the sin offering in Leviticus, the bronze serpent in Numbers. And in every book, right on to Malachi, when he's called the son of righteousness, every book spoke about the coming Messiah. But people who had studied that book for all their life, you know, these old 60-year-old Pharisees who were the leaders in the synagogue, when the Messiah actually walked into their synagogue, they called him Beelzebul, prince of devils.

I mean, I mean, if they called him a prophet, that would have been, also would have been an insult to call Almighty God a prophet. But they went below that. They called him the prince of devils.

And these are people who were scholars. It's not a Roman soldier who had never studied the Bible said, hey, this is the son of God, when he looked at the cross. How did a Roman soldier who'd never studied the Bible say that was the son of God? And the people who studied the Bible said he's the prince of devils.

That is how blind you can be, even after studying the Bible. That's the message for Christians. That Christians can be ignorant of the true worth and the person of Jesus Christ.

Theoretically, they may know, yeah, he's the son of God, he became bad, etc. Turn with me to Acts chapter 13. Acts chapter 13 and verse 27.

Those who live in Jerusalem and they're rulers. When it talks about rulers, remember it's referring to religious leaders. Those are the rulers.

Recognizing neither him, they did not recognize Christ, nor the utterances of the prophets which they read every Sabbath. That means they could not recognize what the prophets were saying in those 39 books, which they read week after week after week after week. And they fulfilled those prophecies by condemning the Messiah who came into their midst.

And when you read that, if you sit back and say, well, I'd never make that mistake. Don't be so sure. We may not reject Jesus Christ's death on the cross.

But what the Holy Spirit today. You see, today, when in the days of, written here in those days, the person of the Godhead that was on earth was the second person. Jesus, the son of God.

He was the one who was on earth and they couldn't recognize him. Today, the person of the Godhead on earth is not Jesus. He's in heaven.

He's the Holy Spirit. The third person of the Godhead is the one who's on earth now. And we may say, yeah, we know about Jesus, but we may not recognize.

I hope you all woke up now. Thank you. Yeah, but we may not recognize what the Holy Spirit is seeking to say to us.

If we are humble, we will hear. I want to recommend that to you. When you study the scriptures, this is how I seek to study the scriptures.

I say, Lord, I'm pretty intelligent when it comes to worldly things. But when it comes to your word, I can be blind as a bat to what you're trying to reveal to me. I can be as blind as those clever Pharisees who thought Jesus was a deceiver.

It's not only them. The Jewish people even today say that Jesus was a deceiver. It hasn't changed 2,000 years.

And Jewish people are some very, very clever people, but they can't see that Jesus was the Messiah. And there was one person like Peter who was not a learned scholar or anything. He said, you're the son of God.

And Jesus said, blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you. Again, he uses that word reveal, Matthew 16, verse 16. It's not flesh.

That means it is not your human cleverness that showed you that I'm the son of God. But my father in heaven gave you revelation. Dear brothers and sisters, value revelation on scripture, not understanding.

You can understand scripture and have no revelation. That's the main reason why many Christians live defeated lives. Defeated in their home.

Defeated in their thought life. Unable to control their tongue and their passions. They've got understanding.

They've got enough understanding to get up and preach. What they lack is revelation. They have intelligence, but not humility.

They may do a lot of activity. You know, Jesus said the Pharisees were missionaries. He said in Matthew 23, they crossed land and sea to make converts.

Imagine a Pharisee giving up his job and people asking, where are you going? He said, I'm going as a missionary. Sacrifice. But they were blind as a bat.

They fasted twice a week. They prayed three times every day. They tithed.

Far more than what many Christians do. But they were blind as a bat. What they lacked was revelation.

And I've seen many, many, many Christians who have understanding of scripture. Thoroughly defeated by sin in their private lives, in their thought lives, in their home life. And I know the answer is, they haven't got revelation.

The veil has not been rent in their life. In between their soul and spirit. They're trying to understand God in the soul.

If I were to use an illustration. It's only an illustration. To try and understand God with your soul, is to try and see with your ear.

Try that. You may have very good hearing, but you can't see with your ear. You may have a brilliant mind, but you cannot know God with your mind.

You need good eyesight to see. You need revelation in your spirit to know God. The spirit and mind are as different as eye and ear.

You can have first class hearing and be totally blind. You can have a brilliant mind and not know God in your spirit. And vice versa.

You can have wonderful eyesight and very poor hearing. So a man may be very dull in his mind. Maybe he couldn't even finish school.

Poor in mathematics. But he may know God in a very deep way. Because he's got revelation in his spirit.

In Christendom generally, we tend to exalt those who have got a good mind. You know, clever preachers. Good musicians.

Who've got a sense of music. These are the things we appreciate. When you don't know God, you appreciate good musicians.

You appreciate clever people. When you're really spiritually minded, you look for men who know God in their spirit. Who have the aroma of Christ in their lives.

It's not a question of how clever they are or how musical they are. They may not be musical at all. I don't know how musical Peter was.

But I'd rather go and sit at his feet than under some musical Christian who doesn't know God. So that's very important for us to understand. You can turn back with me to Ephesians in chapter 3 now.

It says there about this mystery that was not revealed in olden times. The mystery that was not revealed in olden times to people. But which is now revealed.

And what is this mystery? Listen carefully. Something hidden in God that's now being revealed. And I hope I can help you to seek God to get revelation on this.

And here it says in verse 10. This is part of that mystery that the many-sided wisdom of God. The wisdom of God is many-sided like the rainbow with many colors.

Might now be made known through the church. To the rulers and authorities referring to the evil spirits in the heavenly places. Have you ever thought of that? The witness of the church to Satan.

We usually hear about the witness of the church to unbelievers. Be a good witness to your non-Christian neighbors. To your non-Christian office workers.

To your non-Christian relatives. The witness of Christ. You shall be witnesses unto me.

In Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the outermost parts of the earth. That's a very important part of the witness of the Christian. But here it is speaking of a mystery of God.

Which is hidden from the ages. That means God had a great plan. That when the church is formed it should be a witness to Satan.

Now it's much easier to be a witness to people than it is to be a witness to Satan. Do you know that? Much easier. Because people, human beings see less than 5% of your life.

Even those who sit in the same church. Think of somebody who is in the same church as you. Whom you have known for 25 years.

I tell you, you know only 5% of his life. Do you know how he speaks to his wife at home? Not when you are there. When you are not there.

Do you know how she speaks to her husband at home? When nobody is around. They act very holy in the church. But how are they in private? Do you know whether they are faithful with their finances? Now you don't have taxes in Dubai, but wherever you do have to pay taxes.

Do you know whether they pay their taxes properly? Do you know whether they are faithful in clearing their debts? Do you know whether they are faithful in not owing anybody anything and not cheating anyone? Being upright in their business activities? We don't know. Do you know how, and more difficult, do you know how faithful they are in their thoughts? You can be married 50 years and your wife may not be knowing that you have dirty thoughts in your mind. It's very easy to be a witness to people.

You just have to be very careful in your external behavior whenever you are around people. And then when you are at home you just give up all that and say now I can live as I like. This is how most Christians live.

They haven't any clue about this, what God has eagerly longing that there will be a church that will be a witness to Satan who is watching them all the time. See for example a young man, or a young man or even an older man, watching internet pornography on his computer. Because he will watch it when nobody is around.

But he thinks nobody is around. There are demons watching over his shoulder. Looking at this so-called child of God, watching pornography on the computer thinking nobody is watching him.

And there are demons watching him. And the devil is called the accuser of the brethren. And saying to God, God, you see that child of yours? You see how he sings in the church, but see what he is doing right now.

This guy is supposed to be a preacher. But see what he is watching right now. God, is that supposed to be your child? But nobody in the church knows.

Nobody in the church knows what you are doing. So your witness in the church, I am just taking one example, your witness in the church is completely unaffected. You can live like that for 25 years and not lose your testimony before men.

But you are no witness to Satan. Not at all. Not at all.

You haven't understood what God's desire is for the church. The wisdom of God can be manifest to Satan that God can point out individuals and say, See that man. He has the same flesh that all other human beings have.

Do you know when we are born again, we don't get rid of our flesh? We get rid of the old man. Romans 6. The old man is the mind that wanted to sin. That's gone.

But the flesh, a lot of people, by the way, don't understand the difference between the old man and the flesh because they don't read the Bible carefully. They don't have revelation. Let me illustrate that to you.

The old man is like an unfaithful servant who lived inside our heart. The old man referred to in Romans 6. The lusts of the flesh are like the gang of robbers who come to enter this heart in order to steal valuable things. They don't come to steal your money because Satan has no value for money.

They come to steal your joy. They come to steal your purity. They come to steal your humility.

They come to steal your love for people. Those are the things Satan knows have real value in eternity. It's foolish men who think that money and property are the valuable things.

That's only here on earth. It will all perish soon. So they don't come to steal your property.

The devil is not interested in your property or your money. You can have as much as you like. He takes away the real valuable things.

Like when a thief comes into your house, he doesn't steal old newspapers. He steals what is really valuable. And the devil comes into your heart to steal your love, your joy, your peace, etc.

And so, when these lusts of the flesh, the robbers come and knock at the door, the old man says, ah, come right in. Take whatever you want. Take away my purity.

Take away my love. And that's how Christians sin. That's how people sin.

But when a person is really born again, a lot of people today think they are born again because they signed a decision card or said some words. But real born again requires repentance, first of all. If you have not repented in your life, you are not really born again.

Repentance means a turning around from sin. Not a giving up sin. That takes time.

But a turning around. That means I hate it. I want to give it up in my life.

And when a person is turned around and Christ comes in through his Holy Spirit, the old man, this old servant is killed. Romans 6, 6, your old man was crucified with Christ. And now that old servant is dead.

And God places in place of that a new servant. Inside our heart, our spirit. And this servant is against the lusts in the flesh.

The gang of robbers are still alive. They were not killed. The lusts in the flesh, you know, as soon as you, in water baptism you testify that your old man is dead.

But as soon as you come out of the waters of baptism, the lusts in the flesh are pretty active. Tempting you immediately. Showing that the gang of robbers is still alive.

They are still there to come and knock at your door. Let me come in. Christians are tempted.

But now there's a new man inside. A new person who says, I'm not going to open the door. I'm not going to let you in.

And then in that case, how do Christians sin? A Christian sins because he hasn't fed the new man. The new man has not been strengthened with food and exercise. And so it's weak.

So when the new man tries to keep the door shut, that gang of robbers just push their way right in and they steal. Even though the new man didn't want them to come in. That's how a Christian falls into sin.

Those of you who are believers, you know what I'm saying is true. The times when you did not want to sin, you could honestly say, I didn't want to sin. But I sinned.

I didn't want to lose my temper. But I lost it. Really, I hated internet pornography.

But I watched it. See, that's a new man. But the new man is not being strengthened with the word of God or the Holy Spirit.

And therefore, as far as God's testimony to Satan is concerned, this so-called believer is just as bad as the unbeliever. Both of them are into the same old sin. And in fact, this so-called believer is worse because the devil doesn't point the unbeliever to God.

He says, he is one of mine. He behaves that way. He points the believer to God and says, look at how this guy is behaving.

That's why when a believer sins, it's far worse than when an unbeliever sins because the testimony of God is spoiled and the devil gets an opportunity to mock God whenever a believer sins. He cannot do that when an unbeliever sins. It says in Revelation 12 and verse 11, the accuser of our brethren, sorry, verse 10, the accuser of our brethren, the last part of it, accuses God's children before God day and night.

24-7. You know what the devil is doing? Tempting us through his demons. But also, anytime a believer falls, brethren, he is not the accuser of unbelievers.

He is never called the accuser of unbelievers. Why should he accuse his own children? He accuses God's children. He is the deceiver of the whole world.

That's another title in verse 9. That's another thing. He deceives everybody in the world. But when it comes to accusation, he is the accuser of God's children alone.

And he accuses God's children 24-7. That's an example of that is the book of Job. You know the book of Job is, if you've heard me before, you've heard me mention this, that it's the first book in the Bible.

It was written at least 500 years before Moses wrote Genesis. Moses wrote the first five books of what's called our Bible, Genesis, Exodus, and so on. But Moses lived around 1580 and Job lived about 2080.

I don't have time to prove that. There are many instances in the book of Job which indicate that. He probably lived around Abraham's time or before Abraham.

But in any case, out of all the 66 books in the Bible, there's only one book that has no connection with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Every other book has got some connection with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, except Job. Job was written long before any of the other books of the Bible.

It's the first book of the Bible. And that makes us realize something very important. That when God wanted to write a book for man, He did not start with how the heavens and earth were created or even how man was created.

That, God said, can wait 500 years. I'll wait 500 years. When Moses comes along, I'll write that.

But much before that, I want to write another book about a man of God who was a testimony to Satan. Isn't that interesting? That when God wanted to write a book for the human race, the very first book He wrote was about a man who was a testimony for God before Satan. That challenges me.

That shows what is uppermost in God's heart. He wanted a man on earth who would be a testimony for Him before Satan. So, when Satan comes before Him in Job chapter 1, and God says, Where are you coming from? And Satan says, I've been walking around and roaming around on the earth.

You know that Satan, he lives in the heavenlies, in the second heavens. He roams around on the earth. What's he looking for? He's looking for people whom he can accuse through his demons.

The spirits of God, the spirits of evil are millions and they're roaming around the earth looking, looking, looking. Who can I accuse? And many, many people in those days who were religious, Satan could accuse to God saying, that guy claims to know you but he's a hypocrite. Look at the way he lives in private.

It's in the midst of this type of accusation that God turns to Satan and says, But, have you considered, verse 8, my servant Job, Job 1.8. Okay, Satan, all that you say is true. That guy's a hypocrite. That guy's a hypocrite.

That guy's a crook. And that guy's a cheat. And that guy's a doubtful.

But, have you considered my servant Job? He's not like all these others. And he doesn't mention Job's wealth. Job is a wealthy man.

God has no time to talk about his wealth. Though Job was a very famous man, he doesn't talk about his fame. He only says, There is a man.

There's no one like him. He's blameless. He's upright.

You tried to bend him. You tried to bend him but he has not bent. He's upright.

What a wonderful testimony. If God can say about you that Satan tried to bend you, make you compromise, but you would not compromise. Fearing God and hating evil.

That's a tremendous testimony. I remember years ago when I read that as a young man when I started reading the Bible and a challenge came to my heart. Can God point you out to Satan like that? That's a challenge that came to my heart as a young man.

And with all my heart I said, Lord, I want to be like that. I want to be one whom you can point out to Satan. I don't care what men think about me.

It's worth nothing because they know 5% of my life. They don't know anything about my private life. So their testimony is fit for their trash can.

And if you are one of those who is very happy that people think highly about you, I'm going to say you're pretty foolish. What do they know about your life? You should be more concerned that God can point you out to Satan who observes you all the time, who knows how you write your financial accounts, who knows what you watch on the computer, who knows what you're reading, who knows how you talk to people in your office, at home and everywhere, who knows every detail about your life. It's far more important.

I tell you, the testimony of Satan about your life is a million times more important than the testimony of any other human being. Please remember that. Job, God says, if God can say this about you, that there is, dare, can you consider this, this servant of mine, this man, this woman, that there's no one like him in Dubai or Sharjah.

No one like him. Not that he earns the most money, that other people do. Not that he's the smartest or the cleverest, but he's blameless, he's upright.

How many times you've tried to bend him, Satan, but you've never succeeded. You've tried to bend him for 20 years and he's never bent. He's been upright, straight.

He doesn't care for the approval of men. He only fears me. He only wants to please me.

He turns his eyes away from whenever there's evil. You know that, Satan. You've been watching him.

You've been watching him 24-7. And you know he turns his eyes away from evil, whether it's from a magazine or a billboard or a computer or anywhere, or from the streets. He turns his eyes away from evil.

He fears me. He respects me. If you're a true Christian, my brothers and sisters, this is what you should long for more than anything else.

Many of you came to Dubai to earn more money. That's okay. But if that is your goal in life, you've got an idol.

Get rid of that idol and make sure that your aim in life is to be a testimony for God wherever you live. The mystery. God, from ages past, he wanted people on earth who will show his wisdom to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

And Job, Satan says, Well, Job serves you because you blessed him. He won't serve you if you stop blessing him. Does God, does Satan have to say that about any of you? Well, he's serving you because he's got a good job here and he earns a lot of money.

He drives a car around and in the olden days he just rode a bicycle but now he's riding a car and you blessed him so naturally he's happy and God says, Take it away. You can take it away. Satan, he'll still be just the same.

I want to ask you a straight question about how many of you can God challenge Satan and say, Take away those blessings which he got by coming to Dubai, material blessings and make him poor and send him back home to India. He will be just as faithful. He will never have a word of complaint.

He will live in a little hut there and praise me just as much riding a bicycle there as he's praising me now when he's driving a car and living in a big apartment. Yeah. Can, you know the answer.

If any of these things that God has given you means something to you then God can't say that about you. God gives us many things but we don't realize in all those things he's testing us. A lot of people in the world say when God gives me more money he's blessing me.

It's not true. He's testing you. Not blessing you but testing you to see what you're going to do with that extra money.

Lavish it on yourself or live for God's kingdom. Live the same way the same simple way you lived so that you can have more to bless God's people and his kingdom or say Allah now I can live a little better. Have this.

Visit restaurants more frequently. In the olden days I couldn't. Of course it's all for me, for me.

The mark of the children of Adam I'll show you in one sentence. In Philippians chapter 2. Philippians chapter 2. Now I want to say that this is what Satan seeks to keep Christians like. We need to understand the schemes of Satan.

Philippians 2 Paul said about his co-workers. Philippians 2 verse 19. He says I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you.

Paul wanted to send somebody from his team of co-workers to encourage the believers in Philippi and he says I think I'll send Timothy so that I can be encouraged when I learn of your condition. Because among my co-workers, verse 20, I don't have anybody else with the same spirit. Because, here's a description of the human race.

Verse 21. They all seek after their own interests. If you were to ask me can you describe the character of the human race in one sentence, here it is.

They all seek after their own interests. Tell me the character of someone who is a wholehearted Christian. Verse 21.

They seek after the interests of Jesus Christ. There is the dividing line. We divide people as Protestants and Catholics.

Those who speak in tongues and those who don't speak in tongues. Those who are baptized in water as babies and those who are baptized as adults. Those who go to denominational churches and those who go to separated churches and so many divisions we make.

That's how we divide people. But God divides like this. Those who seek their own interests and those who seek the interests of Christ Jesus.

If we were to draw a dividing line here between Catholics and Protestants most of us will all probably be on one side. We are all Protestants. All these divisions that human beings make you may get on the right side.

But what about if God draws a dividing line in this hall and that's something we cannot do. God who sees every one of our hearts including mine. If he says I am going to put on one side all people sitting here who basically in their life are seeking their own interests and on the other hand those who are seeking the interests of Christ Jesus.

I want to ask you. Ask yourself. Which side will you be? Which side will God place you? He comes to you and says you, this side.

You, this side. You, this side. Which side will you be? I know which side I want to be.

I want God to be able to testify of me. Lord, I want to be like Timothy. That I seek the interests of Jesus Christ.

Uppermost my life. Everything else is secondary. My comfort.

My ease. My health. What I earn.

What I don't earn. Where I live. What I spend on myself.

All secondary. I need to live on the earth of course. We live on this earth.

This is the mark of one who can be a testimony to Satan. God says, Satan says look at all these so-called Christians. They go to church regularly.

They sing songs. They read the Bible. But God, can't you see they all in their life are basically seeking their own interests.

Whatever is good for them. That's what they choose. But then God says, yes.

But have you seen this person? And have you seen that other person there? They are not seeking their own. Look at the decisions they make in their life. Look at the principles by which they make a decision.

Where to live. What to do. How to spend their money.

What to buy. What not to buy. Should I waste money on this or not? Yeah, Satan.

I know a lot of people who call themselves my children. And God says, I'm not like that. But have you seen this one? Have you seen that one? They seek the interests of Christ uppermost in their life.

I want to ask you. Do you really want to be one like that? I'm not trying to make anyone condemned. I'm not asking you, are you one like that? Forget that.

I want to ask you, do you want to be one like that? Do you want to be one, at least from today? Never mind your past life. The Bible says, our times of ignorance God overlooks. That's a great verse.

Acts 17.30. Oh Lord, I was ignorant of your ways. Today I heard something that helped me to understand what you're really looking for. I'm sorry, I never heard any preacher tell me this straight to my face before.

They should have told me when I was first converted. But nobody told me. They told me only how God would bless me if I paid my tithe.

They didn't tell me about these important things in life. But now I have understood it. The important thing is not to pay my tithe.

The important thing is not to seek my own. But to seek the things of Christ. But we may say, don't I have to seek my own? Otherwise how will I live on this earth? You seek the interests of Christ and God will add to you everything that you need for life on this earth.

That's not just money. Health. You can't get health with money.

A lot of people spend such a lot of money to try and preserve their health. Health is a gift of God. If you live for God, I tell you this, He'll give you everything needed.

Not only for yourself. That blessing will overflow from you to your children. And they will begin to live for God.

That can overflow from them to their children. It's the best life you can ever live. If you're a righteous person.

When the Bible speaks about a righteous man. Job was a righteous man. It means one who did not seek his own interests.

For us today it means one who seeks the interests of Christ. Timothy was a righteous man. He sought God's righteousness.

He wanted to be upright. To seek that which is things of Christ. There are certain blessings when you are a righteous man.

James chapter 5 says. James 5. And verse 16. James 5.16. The effective prayer of a righteous man.

The last part of that verse. James 5.16. The effective prayer of a righteous man. Can accomplish much.

When two believers pray. Both are believers. One person's prayer can have more effect than the other person's.

Even though both are praying in the name of Jesus Christ. Why is that? Both have accepted Christ as Savior. Both are baptized in water.

And maybe both are baptized in the Holy Spirit. And both may be speaking in tongues and whatever else. And both may know the Bible.

And both may be preachers. But yet one person's prayer accomplishes more. One person's prayer is heard by God.

Because he is a righteous man. He does not seek his own. But he seeks the things of God.

God hears his prayer. And the other person's prayer. I don't know.

It just says here that the prayer of a righteous man. Can accomplish much. It's worth being righteous.

Prayer can accomplish a lot of things that money can't do. It's worth being righteous my brother and sister. It's worth seeking the interests of Christ.

Uppermost in your life always. Really worth it. Even from a human standpoint.

Isn't it a wonderful thing? To be one whose prayers are heard by God. I really want to be like that. I want to be one whose prayers are heard by God.

Let me show you another blessing of being a righteous person. Psalm 37 it says, David wrote most of his psalms when he was a young man. Before he was 30.

Before he was 30, David wrote many scriptures. But Psalm 37 is a scripture that he wrote when he was an old man. When he was nearly 70.

And what he says here is in Psalm 37. He says about a righteous man. Verse 25.

Psalm 37, 25. He says, I've been young but now I'm an old man writing this psalm. And in all these 70 years, I have never seen God forsake a righteous man.

Boy. Imagine. That God will never, never forsake you.

Or leave you helpless in some situation. Impossible. I like to be there.

Because there are so many complicated situations we get into in life on this earth. With the devil and human beings and so many people trying to make life difficult for us in so many ways. And the world itself is under a curse.

All types of problems are there. But if I can have God always saying, Listen, I'll stand by you. I'll never let you down.

That's not all. It says that the righteous man's descendants, that means children and grandchildren, will never beg for bread. Will never beg for bread means they'll get a job.

The only way to avoid begging for bread is by getting a job and earning your own living. So I paraphrase it like this, that if you are really one of those who seek the interest of Christ and you're a righteous person, God will stand by you through thick and thin. And not only that, your children will get jobs.

Your grandchildren will get jobs. Do you want that? You see, I can get them jobs by education. There are a lot of educated people who don't get good jobs.

You know that. But if you're a righteous person, your children are going to be blessed. Your grandchildren are going to be blessed.

I've seen it happen. It's really true. This is what God wants to point out to Satan in heaven.

I have a generation of people on earth, a few people. There are not many like that. In Paul's co-workers team, there was only one, Timothy.

Because all the others, they just seek their own. They're all preachers. They know the Bible and preach wonderful things and speak in tongues and all that, but they're seeking their own.

Because Paul was a man with discernment. He was a very shrewd man. You couldn't fool Paul.

He saw through all the superficiality of his co-workers and he said, Yeah, yeah, yeah. They came to be baptized in the Holy Spirit and all that type of stuff. They know the Bible.

They're very eloquent people. But in their life, I can see that they seek their own. But Timothy is different.

When you read something like that in Philippians 2, how does it speak to your heart? Does it speak to your heart and say, Lord, I want to be one like Timothy. Every single day, I do not... It doesn't matter to me if other Christians are not like that. It doesn't matter to me if other Christians around me seek their own.

I will not judge them, but I don't want to be like them either. I want to be like Timothy. I don't want to seek my own in anything.

God wants to have a witness before the devil. I want to tell you another thing. One of the things that made the devil the devil was the spirit of discontent.

Even though he was the head of the angels, he was not content with his position. I mean, you would have thought that being an angel itself is a great thing. But being the head of the angels, what more do you want, man? You are the head of all the created beings.

And he wasn't content. He wanted more. He wanted more.

He was greedy for position and honor. He wanted more than what God had given him. And he became the devil like that.

There is a lesson for us to learn there. When you are not content with the way God has made you and with what God has given you and you are discontent with something or the other in your life, whether you know it or not, there is a little bit of the devil right inside your heart. And it shouldn't be there.

It shouldn't be there. Discontent. Wanting more than what God has given you.

Discontent with what God has given. There is a saying that there is enough in this world for every man's need but not enough in this world for even one man's greed. It's true.

A greedy person is never satisfied. He always wants more. He wants more money or more influence or he is seeking his own.

That's why the Bible says in Hebrews in chapter 13 Verse 5 Let your character be free from the love of money. Hebrews 13, 5 Be content with what you have because then God himself says I will never desert

you. I will never forsake you.

You know one of the blessings of being perfectly content with what God has given you is this promise. God says I won't desert you. I won't forsake you.

But if you are constantly discontented with something or the other you won't have God with you. That I'll tell you. How do we know whether we are discontented? We murmur.

We complain. Anyone who murmurs or complains or grumbles about anything is discontented with something. He is not able to accept and be thankful for what he has.

And if you want to make sure the devil has got no place in your life obey one command. Philippians 2, 14 Philippians 2, 14 I want to tell you in case you didn't know my guess is 99% of born again believers of born again believers do not obey this command. Do everything without grumbling or complaining.

It took a long time. I'll tell you I was born again for many years before I took that word seriously. But there was a time in my life when I decided to take it seriously.

Lord, from now onwards by the grace of God I will never, never, never grumble or complain or murmur about anything. I'm going to be content with whatever you gave. Or whatever you withhold from me is perfectly alright.

Do all things. I could point out a number of verses in scripture which Christians don't obey. And that's why they cannot be a testimony to Satan.

I pray that you will have revelation in your spirit about me. About what I've said today. That God wants you my brother, sister, perhaps that's why he brought you here.

To listen to this message. Maybe it's a new revelation to your heart. That he wants you from today onwards to be a witness to Satan like Job was.

And more than Job because we have the Holy Spirit. Job was alright in chapter 1 and chapter 2, that's all. And then he was alright in chapter 42.

But all the other chapters in between he wasn't okay. If you read Job's talk in all those chapters there's this up and down experience where sometimes he'd say, yeah, even if he kills me I will trust him. And then he would say, oh, why in the world are you treating me like this? God, I'm fed up.

And then another time he'd say, I know my redeemer lives and I will stand with him. And then he'd be back in the dumps again. Justifying himself.

The typical experience of many Christians. Sometimes up on the mountain, down in the valley. But Jesus and Paul were not like that.

They talk about a life where they always give thanks. Rejoicing always. Never murmuring or complaining.

This was not possible in the Old Testament. Because in Job's time the veil was not rent. Holy Spirit could not dwell in Job's spirit.

He had a temporary boost of saying, yes, I accept what God gives. But it didn't last. The wonderful thing about us is now what was Job's experience in chapter 1 and 2 can be permanent in our hearts.

Because we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within. That's why the most important thing in the Christian life is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Not to have a one-time experience like our dear Pentecostal friends say.

But a continuous fullness of the Spirit. And one mark of it is, you will never seek your own. Another mark of it is, you will never grumble or complain.

But like it says in Ephesians 5, 18, Be filled with the Spirit, always giving thanks for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It will make wives submit to their husbands. It will make husbands love their wives like Christ loved the church.

It will overflow into our family life, etc. It will make us witnesses by our life, not just our words. It will make us a witness to Satan.

This is true Christianity as God wants it. And if what you have heard today has created a little hunger in your heart for something more than you have experienced so far in your life, I want to tell you the good news, that God can do that for you. Even if you were born again yesterday.

You don't have to have years of experience. Just go before the Lord and say, Lord, please show me where I am seeking my own. I want to walk in Jesus' footsteps who never sought his own.

I want to walk in the footsteps of Paul and Timothy who never sought their own but lived for you. I don't want to play games in Christianity, pretending, singing songs and preaching messages and pretending to be very spiritual before people. And Satan has a big laugh.

And says, Jesus I know and Paul I know. And I know all about you also. Who do you think you are? I don't want Satan to mock me like that.

Do you know that he mocked some people in Acts 19 saying, Jesus I know and Paul I know. I'm scared of them but not you fellas. I often think, does Satan talk to me like that? Jesus I know, Paul I know.

I know all about you. I know all about your private life. You have no power over me.

Because you seek your own. I know some people who have power over me but not you. You can fool everybody in your church, Satan says, but you can't fool me.

Does Satan say that to you? Boy. Think of the shame it brings to our Savior who gave his life to save us from that. It's really gripped me.

I tell you, I'm speaking from my heart. I want to be a testimony before Satan for the glory of my Savior. He gave his life for me.

That I might be a testimony for him. I don't want the empty honor of men. I want to be a testimony before Satan for the glory of God.

I hope you want to also. Let's bow our heads before God in prayer. Don't think this is an impossible standard.

It is impossible by human standards. That's why God wants you to eagerly cry out to him to thirst to be filled with this Holy Spirit. To open up every part of your being to Jesus.

To confess every known sin. To ask to be cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ. And to surrender every area of your life to Christ and say, Lord, forgive me the days of my failure in the past.

Please overlook those days of ignorance. I turn from everything of that way of life and I want to live for you from now on. I want to live for the things that are eternal.

I don't want to play games in my Christianity. I want to be serious. I don't want to just hear a message and be stirred temporarily.

I want my whole way of life to be changed. Lord, help me. Please fill me with your Holy Spirit.

I will not let you go unless you bless me. I don't care how long it takes. I want to get onto a completely new plane.

A completely new level of the Christian life. Help me, Father. Father in heaven, I pray that there will be a hunger in some hearts here, at least, if not many, to fulfill your eternal purpose.

We might be a testimony to demonic forces. That our life can shut the mouth of the devil when it comes before you. Lord, make us like that.

Make me a man who can shut the mouth of the devil before you. Make us men and women who shut the mouth of the devil when it comes before you that he's got nothing to accuse us of. We pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/ioGrIQ7bLaQ.mp4>

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