

# (Come Up Higher) the Place of Blessing

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of seeking spiritual blessings in the heavenly places and understanding our identity as chosen by God to live a victorious Christian life.*

**Duration:** 55:39

**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1, Proverbs 10:22, Matthew 3:2, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 1:1, Ephesians 1:3-4

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Heavenly Blessings"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living a life that brings praise and glory to God's grace. He highlights the concept of the 'summing up of all things in Christ,' which refers to the administration suitable to the fullness of time. The speaker warns against using manipulative tactics, such as flattery and sob stories, to win someone's affection. He encourages listeners to prioritize their relationship with God and strive to be like Jesus, rather than seeking happiness in earthly possessions. The sermon is based on the book of Ephesians, specifically focusing on the theme of dwelling in the heavenly places.

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## Transcript

Our subject and theme for this conference is Come Up Higher. And the morning sessions, every day these four mornings, are going to be a Bible study, and the theme of the Bible study is In the Heavens. And then you know which book that is from.

That is from Ephesians, where we are going to look at four things that will be ours if we dwell in the heavens. So we begin with Ephesians chapter one. These words are not written for unbelievers, nominal Christians.

It is written here in verse one, Paul an apostle by the will of God to the saints who are at Ephesus. Now the word saint has got a lot of wrong understandings in many people's minds. People say, well, I'm not a saint, I'm just a sinner.

The word saint is related to the word sanctify, holy, and all it means is set apart. A saint is one who is set apart. When Jesus chose you to be his child, to be a child of God, part of his kingdom, he set you apart from all the rest of humanity.

He didn't do that arbitrarily. He did that because he knew that you wanted him. And so he set you apart.

You know, it's like a whole lot of stones, and you pick out one and say, I'm going to make that a precious stone. It's a wonderful thing to be set apart by God, to be called, you know, to take one stone out of a pile of stones taken out. Think of all these construction sites we see on the way, where we see piles of granites, broken up stones.

That's how we were in the crowd in the multitude. And one day Jesus came by and picked out one stone. That was you.

That was me. We must never forget that. Jesus told his disciples, you did not choose me.

I chose you. Many times we think that we chose the Lord. No, we chose him because he chose us.

So the best way I have heard it explained is, all of humanity is walking down a road, and on one side you see a gate which is saying, whoever will, can enter into the kingdom of heaven. And you chose to enter in through that gate. And as you entered in through the gate, you look back and on the inside of the gate it was written, you were actually chosen before the foundation of the world.

Now you see that on the outside. On the outside what you see is, whoever wants to enter the kingdom of heaven can come. But when you get inside, you realize it's written over the gate, you were actually chosen before the foundation of the world.

You know, if you don't find your security in that, all your life you will be an insecure Christian. It is the reason why you have so many complaints. It's the reason why spiritually you never seem to come up higher.

It's the reason why you never seem to come to a life of victory, even though you hear about victory so often. Let's turn to Ephesians 1, to the saints, those who are set apart. And it says here, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You see, there are people who say, there are people like that in the world today, some very famous television preachers as well, who say that there is no trinity. That means God is not three persons, but one God. And the Lord Jesus Christ is the Father, and He is the Son, and He is the Holy Spirit, having three different offices, but only one God.

Like, you know, I can say I'm a husband to somebody, I'm a father to somebody, I'm an elder to somebody, but I'm one person. So that's what many people teach, that the meaning of trinity is only, that's why He's called Lord Jesus Christ, referring to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But then, when I ask such people, who is this person? Verse 3, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Is that some type of grandfather whom we forgot all about? You see, when you deny the trinity as three persons, you run into a lot of problems throughout scripture. The main problem you run into is that you deny the humanity of Christ. That is why, when people are baptized in the name of Jesus, denying the trinity, I always baptize them again.

I say, without knowing it, you denied the trinity once upon a time, and you denied the humanity of Jesus. How do we say we deny the humanity of Jesus? Because when He said in Gethsemane, not My will but Thine be done. I mean, if He had only three offices, it would be like me saying, I'm a husband and a father, I'm not going to do the Father's will, I'm going to do the husband's will.

What does that mean? It means my own will, with another office. So then, you're saying that Jesus said, not My will but My will. You completely denied His humanity.

The main thing about the humanity of Christ, which a lot of people argue about, is the fact that He had a will of His own, which He had to deny. And in Gethsemane, you see that. I don't want to drink this cup, but Father, that was His human will, but Father, if it's Your will, I'll drink it.

There are definitely two different persons there. It's very important, because some of us may think of it all as just a small little difference of opinion. It's not.

It's a very serious thing if you understand Scripture. And that's why I ask such people to be baptized again and say, renounce that false doctrine that you had. So we baptize people in the name of the Father and the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, identifying the Son, not as Vishnu or some Egyptian god, but as Jesus Christ.

And that's why in the Acts of the Apostles, it's mentioned that they were baptized in the name of Jesus. They identified the Son of God as the Lord Jesus. So blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and listen to this, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

So today, what we're going to think about in our Bible study is the blessing that is ours in the heavenlies. So it says here, every spiritual blessing. Now, you've got to read this verse very carefully.

Every spiritual blessing, it's not material blessing. It's very important to know that in the Old Testament, nobody could quote this verse and say, this is what God has done for me. If there were a similar verse in the Old Testament, under the Old Covenant, it would read like this.

Blessed be God. They'd had no revelation of the Trinity in the Old Testament. Blessed be God, who has blessed us with every material blessing in Canaan's land through Moses and Joshua.

That is the equivalent of this verse in the Old Covenant. And those material blessings involved plenty of money, plenty of property, physical health. Your wives will never have miscarriages.

Your cattle won't have miscarriages. Your cattle will be abundant. That was the wealth of people in those days.

You know, when they counted the wealth of Job, they counted the camels and the donkeys and things like that. That is the wealth of people in those days. So their cattle would multiply and the fields would multiply.

We need to very clearly distinguish the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. And I believe the main reason why many people do not enter into a life of victory over sin, despite many years of trying for it, is because they're trying to get it in the earthly places, and you can't get it. You have to be willing to be transported to the heavenly places, because the blessing of victory is only there.

So if you are seeking after earthly blessing in the name of Jesus, I can guarantee that you will not get victory over sin, even if you listen to it for a hundred years. You might as well give up, because those blessings are not in the earthly places. There's not a single promise in the Old Testament that you can have victory over sin.

And if you're finding it difficult for elders together, elders having conflict with each other, again, the problem is, in the Old Testament, Aaron and Moses couldn't get along with each other. Aaron was

criticizing Moses, and they were the elders of Israel. That is an Old Testament life.

And when people don't come into the fullness of New Covenant life, then even Paul and Barnabas will fight with each other. But they wouldn't have done that once they came into the fullness of New Covenant life years later. Don't think that everything that the apostles did right from day one was New Covenant.

No. When Paul shaved his head, when he circumcised Timothy, that was not New Covenant. But don't judge him.

The New Testament was not written. They were in a transition stage, and things were getting settled. And in those days, they had disputes and many other things like that.

There's no excuse for that today. The blessing of unity, the blessing of victory, is found only in the heavenly places. And all that you hear in the church, that you've heard in the church for many years, can be yours if you make one decision.

And that is what John the Baptist preached in his message. Do you know what John the Baptist preached? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near. He was saying that to thousands and thousands of people who had spent their whole life seeing after earthly things.

Because they were blessed with earthly things for 1500 years. And when John the Baptist said, repent, repent means turn around. He was not telling them to turn around primarily from sin alone, but turn around from your preoccupation with earthly things, as you have been for 1500 years.

If you turn around, you'll find the kingdom of God is very near. If you don't turn around, the kingdom of God is going to be very far. And you'll never find it.

I have discovered through the years that this is the main reason why many people in our churches never come to a life of victory. Their life never comes to peace and joy. Because what are husbands and wives arguing about mostly at home? Earthly things.

Something wrong with the food, or some sari was not bought, or something was not done. If your mind is set on earthly things, you cannot experience what it says here in verse 3. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. And spiritual means related to the Holy Spirit.

Every blessing of the Holy Spirit is already ours. But I've got to get it in the heavenly places, in Christ. I have to come in Christ first, and make a decision in my life that I'm going to live in the heavenlies.

And that's why the Lord invites us to come up higher. And I'll tell you this, even if you are converted yesterday, if you make a decision today to come up higher to the heavenly places, I guarantee you will progress more spiritually in the next one year than all these other people sitting here who have heard these messages for 25 years and are still preoccupied with earthly things. It's all a question of choice.

If somebody has gone ahead into a life of triumph, remember he made a series of choices at different situations to refuse to go lower but higher, meaning I'm going to set my mind on the things above. So these blessings are in the heavenly places. Every blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Why is it many people who seek for the baptism or the fullness of the Holy Spirit either never get it or get a counterfeit? Either never get it or get a counterfeit. You know why? Because they're seeking for something earthly. These blessings of the Spirit are in the heavenlies.

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is not meant to give me a physical thrill. It's meant to make me a burning, shining light, a witness for Jesus Christ, a witness that the things of heaven are more important than the things of earth. I mean, if that's your goal, I'll tell you, the Lord will fill you with the Holy Spirit continuously.

Your rivers of living water will definitely flow out from you. You know this word, believe. He who believes in me, Jesus said in John 7, out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

Believe means, do you believe what Jesus said? That you are not of the earth, just like I'm not of the earth. You're not of this world, just like I'm not of this world. Do you believe that or not? Let me show you that verse in John's gospel chapter 15.

John's gospel chapter 15, it says, he told, he didn't say that to the crowd. He didn't even say that to many who believed in him. We know that after his resurrection, he appeared to 500 believers.

So there were at least 500 believers on earth at that time. But he did not say that to all of them. And if there are 500 people here who believe in Jesus, he may not say that to all of you.

He said it to 11 people who really wanted to be wholehearted disciples. And I trust there are more than 11 today who really want to be wholehearted disciples so the Lord can say to you, John 15, verse 19, if you were of the world, the world would love its own. But because you're not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, I told you from the pile of stones, he set apart one stone.

That's called a saint, set apart, separated. Because of this, the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, a servant is not greater than his master.

If they persecuted me, they will persecute you. If they kept my word, they'll keep yours also. There were people who persecuted Jesus and there were people who kept Jesus' word.

A small number kept his word, many persecuted him. And I have been convinced for many, many years that if I follow Jesus, a few will keep and hear what I say, but many will persecute me. I mean, that's because I'm not greater than the master.

Now, if people are not persecuting you, you probably are greater than the master. You've made yourself greater than the master. Look what he says, the servant is not greater than the master.

If they persecuted me, they'll persecute you. The trouble with Christendom today is, they want to be friendly with great people in the world. And they think that's a great thing.

Well, such people won't be persecuted, but they won't lead people into heavenly riches either. We need to recognize what John the Baptist was preparing people for a completely new type of life. He was saying, turn around from this pursuit of earthly things, which you have been, that was permitted by God for 1500 years.

It was right as long as you're under the old covenant. And if you choose to live under the old covenant, it is still right for you. But those of you who want to leave the old covenant, because God has abolished the old covenant and want to enter into the new covenant, you've got to turn around and seek the things that are above, seek the kingdom of heaven, seek the kingdom of God.

And then you may say, what about the earthly things I need? Jesus said, seek the kingdom of God first. The others will be added to you. You don't seek them.

What you need gets added. Do you think God did not know that Adam needed a wife? God gave him a wife. Do you think God did not know that Adam needed a home? God gave him a home in Eden.

That is the best home any man ever had. Do you think God did not know that Adam needed a job? He gave him a job as a gardener. These are the three things people seek.

A job, a house, and a wife or husband. Right in the beginning of scripture, you see that God gave all those things to Adam without his seeking for it. What the Lord told him on the Sabbath day, which was his first day, was, Adam, you seek me and you'll get everything else.

You seek those other things, you may get those things, but you won't get me. It's not only the people who seek God who get a house and a job and a wife. There are multitudes of people in the world who are atheists, who get good jobs, good houses and good wives, but they don't have God.

It's far better to seek God and his kingdom and have these other things we need added to us. For myself, I can say with absolute certainty, because I've experienced this for more than 45 years, that anything I need in my life of earthly things, anything my family needs in all my life, whether it is healing or money or a place to live, it will be added. And no devil or demon is going to stop me from having it.

Why? Because I'm not pursuing after those things. And I have never pursued after those things. Some of you are pursuing after those things, and you got it.

But what is the level of your spiritual life? Let me recommend to you a better way. You may not be so rich, but you'll get enough that you need. I agree that if you pursue after these things, you may get a lot more money, you may get a prettier wife, who may cause you more trouble, and you may get a better house.

But is that what you're going to live for? Whereas if you seek God and his kingdom first, if you set your mind on the things above, along with every spiritual blessing will be added, you'll get a wife who is spiritually minded, whose beauty is inward, that will last for 50 years and more. You'll get a house which will be more than enough for you and your family to live in. You'll get a job that you'll never get into debt.

I can say that after 68 years. I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, be a living testimony in your locality that you are one who decided to seek for spiritual blessings in the heavenly places and found a few necessary things of earth added to you. So if you covet, covet for the things that are above.

If you're anxious, be anxious about eternal things. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as, or because he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. God chose us.

When did he choose us? Before the foundation of the world. The foundation of the world is written in Genesis chapter one, verse one. In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

This verse goes before Genesis one, verse one. If you want to know what happened before Genesis one, verse one, go to Ephesians one, verse four. My name is there.

And if you were a child of God, your name is there too. So what happens before Genesis one, verse one? There's God. Before angels were created.

No angel's name is in the book of life, by the way. No angel was chosen before the foundation of the world. But before they were all created, there was father, son and Holy Spirit and you and me in God's

mind.

That's the book. The book is God's mind. He doesn't have written paper and pencil.

He's got a mind which contains our names. You know, if you believe that, I do. It brings such tremendous security to me.

I mean, when I think of the future, I say, well, Lord, I don't know what the future holds for me. People are afraid as they grow older. Oh, who will look after me when I'm old? The Lord says in Isaiah 46, four, I created you.

I bore you so far. I will bear you to your old age. You don't have to worry.

People are worried. Will I get cancer? Will I get this? Will I get that? You don't have to have those fears. If you know that your name was in God's mind before the worlds were created.

I'm very important to God. If you can recognize that you won't be fighting with human beings for earthly things. If you recognize how important you are to God.

You know, when we speak about humility, humbling yourself and don't have high thoughts about yourself, people say, oh, Brother Zach, you're getting people to have low self-esteem. You know, that's what the psychologists say nowadays. People have low self-esteem.

They think they're nobody. And that's why they have so many problems. I'll tell you, I don't have any low self-esteem.

I think I'm more important than the president of the United States or anybody else in the world, because I'm a child of God. I'm a younger brother of Jesus Christ. Who said I'm unimportant? I was not an accident.

I was in God's mind before the worlds were created. Before the worlds were created, I was in God's mind. I was in his book by name.

Not human being number 5,689,347. No. By name.

My name was there. Do you believe that? It's all a question of faith. I'll tell you something.

In the New Testament, the most important thing is faith. There's a verse in James 1 which says, if you don't believe, you can be absolutely sure you'll get nothing from the Lord. When the blind men came to Jesus, he said, do you believe I can open your eyes? If they said, well, I'm not so sure, Lord.

They would have remained blind all their life. Somebody else says, Lord, I believe you can do it. His eyes are opened.

It's the same thing here. God chose me before the worlds were created. Lord, I believe it.

It's brought security into my life. Why are many of you so insecure? Oh, will God provide for this for me, that for me, the other for me? Will he provide a husband? Will he provide a wife? Will he provide a job? Will he provide a house? Well, you're not so sure, right? Whether God chose you before the foundation of the world. The problem lies there.

You either seek it God's way or you seek it the world's way. Many earthly things you can get in two ways, either God's way or the earth's way. With the earth's way, you'll get a lot of plenty of it.

God's way, you'll get just enough for your needs. But God's way is the better way because there are no heartaches, no disappointments, no sorrows, no pains. The blessing of the Lord, it makes rich.

And it says there is no sorrow with it. A lot of people, earth blessing makes them rich. But along with those riches, there are so many sorrows.

They get marry a pretty girl and they've got so many sorrows with that pretty girl. Whereas when God gives you a wife, there's no sorrow with it. I'll tell you everything we must learn.

Say, Lord, I'm determined to come up higher in this conference. I'm determined to live in the heavenlies because that's where you bless people today. In the Old Testament, I know he blessed people on the earth.

And when people said to people in the Old Testament, the Lord bless you, like, you know, number 624, Aaron was commanded to bless the people of Israel. The Lord bless you and keep you and lift up his face upon you and give you peace. What they wanted and what they expected was, you know, I'll have more money.

I'll have many children. I'll have plenty of health. God will take care of me.

That's what they expected. And that's what they got. But today, when it says God will bless you, what are you expecting? When somebody says God bless you, what is the blessing you're expecting? What is the blessing you're expecting for your children? I'll tell you, one of the greatest disappointments I have seen in my life is born again believers who are happy that their children are earning a lot of money.

Which covenant do you think such believers are living in? And the children are not spiritual. They're not wholehearted. They're not radical for Jesus.

Oh, they say, it's okay. They've got good jobs. Are you one like that? That you're happy that your son or daughter got a good job? He's not poor like you were when you were young.

You're happy. But is he a wholehearted disciple of Jesus? That's the point. And there we discover, I'll tell you this, it's a thing that we want most of all for our children.

Listen, the thing that you want most of all for your children shows me where your mind really is. The thing that makes you happy about your children shows me where your mind really is, no matter what you may say about being in the heavenlies. But today the Lord says to you, come up higher.

You know, if you're going to be satisfied that your child came first in the class in school, got admission to a good college, or has finished college, got a good job, or has even got a good hunter wife and got a house to live in. And those are the things that make you sleep peacefully at night. Even though he's not a radical disciple of Jesus, it shows me not the condition of your child's heart, but the condition of your heart.

That you're not disturbed. You don't toss around in your pillow at night because your son or daughter is not a radical disciple of Jesus. Why? I mean, if he didn't have a job, or he wasn't getting admission in any college, and he was 30 years old and unemployed, then you'd be tossing around at night.

But now he's got a good job, he's got married, he's got a good wife. The only thing, he's not spiritually minded. Ah, that's not so important.

That shows you where your mind really is. Because I'll tell you this, what we desire for our children is a pretty good indication of what is deep down in our heart. And what makes us happy in our children is what we really desire deep down in our heart, even though superficially we may polish it with spiritual language and heavenly language and all that type of stuff.

God grants us the deepest desires of your heart. Delight in the Lord, he gives you the desires of your heart, whatever is deep down. That's why you got it.

That's all you wanted. And there we discover how we are not so heavenly minded as we think we are. We can talk about it, and that's why we don't get the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

Let me go further. It says here, the reason why he chose us was, again, not to take us to heaven. He did not choose me before the worlds were created to take me to heaven.

He did not choose me before the worlds were created to make me rich or famous in this earth. It's very clearly written in verse 4, he chose me so that I would be holy and blameless, not before men, but before him. Now how many of us want that? To be holy and blameless before men, I tell you, that's a very easy thing, because other human beings see less than 5% of your life.

Even your wife can see only about 10% of your life. To be holy and blameless before human beings is the easiest thing in the world. The Pharisees managed it so well.

Judas Iscariot managed it so well, even though the other 11 were living with him for three and a half years, they still couldn't discover that he was a crook, because on the last day when Jesus said, one of you will betray me, nobody thought of Judas Iscariot. That shows what a smart guy he was. To be holy and blameless before men, but God never chose me to be holy and blameless before you.

That is why you have often heard me say, the opinions of men are fit for the trash can, for the garbage bin, whether good opinions or bad opinions. I remember years ago the Lord said to me, you know when I heard some violent criticism of myself, it used to disturb my heart a little bit. And the Lord said, I want to bring you to the place where no matter how severe the criticism, there will not even be a flutter in your heart.

And the Lord said, I want to bring you to the place where when people praise you to the skies, there will also not be a flutter in your heart that you begin to think you're somebody. What a life to come to, whether people speak evil or good, not a flutter in our heart, because we know this person's opinion and that person's opinion who has seen one percent of my life is fit for the trash can. Now you've heard that many times.

Do you really believe it's true? If you really believed it were true, you wouldn't be so keen to be holy and blameless before people. You would be very keen to be holy and blameless before God. And the test of whether we seek to be holy and blameless before God or before men is here.

In what we think and see it. That's our thought life. And the mark of a man who is seeking to be holy and blameless before God is that he is very careful to see that his thoughts are pure.

He repents when he falls in his thoughts, not when he falls outwardly. Not anybody will repent. Even a thief when he's caught will appear to repent because he's caught.

Look at all these preachers who repent when they are caught in adultery or caught stealing money or something like that. That didn't happen in one day. All their life they lived before men.

But the man who lives before God, he's not worried about the opinions of men. I want to urge you, my brothers and sisters, seek to come to a life where there will not be a flutter in your heart when people praise you or criticize you. Then you know that you really died with Christ.

We'll come to that tomorrow. You know you can't come to the heavenlies unless you first die. And one mark of death is they're not disturbed.

You try it out in a cemetery, go sometime to a cemetery to somebody who died maybe just yesterday. So his body still looks like a human being. Praise him, criticize him, not a flutter.

You know he's really dead. But if he's only pretending to be dead, then there will be a change when you praise him or criticize him. Thereby you discover whether you're dead or not.

For myself, that is a test. That's where God shows me whether I really died with Christ or not. Whether I'm crucified with Christ, whether it's just a verse in the Bible or whether it's really mine.

Because that's the only way I can get to the heavenlies. He wants me to be holy and blameless before him. That's why he chose me.

He didn't choose me to be rich, by the way. He didn't choose me to be famous. He chose me to be holy and blameless before him.

All the other things are secondary. I always want to see that for myself. That the size of my bank account is absolutely secondary, is as unimportant as whether I'm wearing a red shirt or a blue shirt.

Now in the world it is not. In the world they say if you've got a lot of money, it's much better, you can live a more comfortable life. It's all true.

But I'll tell you this. A comfortable life does not necessarily lead to holiness. To me, it's unimportant.

If I have it, well and good. If I don't have it, it's just the same. It's just the same to me whether I wear a blue shirt or a red shirt or a white shirt.

That's whatever God gives me, I wear it. You know, when you really come up higher, like you see in that picture there, many things on earth become very small. Even huge skyscrapers become like little tiny toys.

It's one of the blessings of being lifted up to the heavenlies. So if the things of earth are pretty big to you, the blessing of earth means so much to you, you automatically know where you are, whether you're on earth or in the heavenlies. Now is this true or not? Are we talking about things which we don't practice? I can stand before God and say, that's the way I seek to live my life.

You can live your life like that. It'll be a triumphant life. And God told, created Adam, he said, let us make man that they rule over everything on the earth.

Are you ruling over everything on the earth? Are you ruling over money? Are you ruling over the gold and silver of the earth and the diamonds and the jewels and the lots of things that actually various ladies are very particular about? They mean so much. I must have this and I must have that. You're not ruling over those things.

They are ruling over you. When you think that I must, I cannot live without that. Then something is ruling over you.

You're supposed to rule over these things. Nothing on earth, if you have it, well and good. If you don't have it, it's fine.

Those are not the important things. And I want to say to you, this is not some opinion I came to after I became 68 years old. That was my view when I was 25.

It's not that after you get old and all your children are married, then you begin to do that. No. I mean, those who knew me when I was 25, I would tell you the same thing.

You can be like that as a young person. Why should you start seeking heavenly things after you're 65? Why not start when you're 17, like Joseph, who had visions of heavenly things when he was 17. Yeah, God, I mean, God may make a man, a ruler in Egypt like Joseph or a poor fisherman like Peter.

That's up to him. It's up to God to decide what type of house we live in, etc., etc. But in God's eyes, the important thing is not these things.

I'll tell you this. Believe me, I believe this with all my heart. The type of house I live in is as unimportant to me as the color of shirt I wear.

If I have it, I use it. If I don't have it, it doesn't mean anything to me because I know these things for a short time. It's like a train journey.

Okay, the compartment I got may not be very comfortable. There are a few bedbugs on the bed, but it's only a few days. I'm going to reach Delhi in a couple of days.

I'm not going to live in this train compartment. You spend your life wasting. Do you recognize? You know, this world is not my home.

I'm just a passing through. It's so important. He has blessed us with every blessing in the heavenly places.

He wants us to be holy and blameless before him. In love, verse 5, he predestined us to be sons through Jesus Christ to himself. You know, just like you as a father, I want to say to all of you fathers, supposing you had the opportunity to select the best possible job for your son or daughter, whatever it was, which you think is the uppermost, admission to the IIT or to the IAS or some top medical college, and you had the power to do it, and God says, sure, you can have it.

Won't you select the best for your children? Do you think God is a foolish father? He selects the best for his children. I believe that. The thing is, when we are immature, we don't know what is the best.

You ask a two-year-old whether he wants to join the IIT or the IAS, he says, no, just give me a two-rupee toy, that's what I'm after. And that's what immature, spiritual babies seek for, that which is going to pass away in a little while. But a heavenly father knows that the thing that will bless me for all eternity is if I seek

with all of my heart to live holy and blameless before him in love.

Let the others cheat and make money. I'm not going to cheat and make money. I may have less, so what? But every fine that I have must be earned uprightly, without having cheated anybody, because that's the way I can be holy and blameless before him in love.

And in eternity, you'll see the value of that. So, in his great love for us, he determined beforehand, predestination means he determined my destination beforehand, that I should be his son. And that I should be for the praise, verse 6, of the glory of his grace, that God can show me to the angels in eternity and say, see this man, what a rotten sinner he was.

See what I made out of him, because he cooperated with me. My brothers and sisters, will you be to the praise of the glory of his grace in eternity? He goes on to say that in verse 9, he made known to us the mystery of his will. And I want to show you something here.

In verse, I want to read further down. The summing up, it says in the middle of the verse, the summing up of all things in Christ. This is a difficult verse.

With a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times that is the summing up of all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on the earth. Did you understand that? No, neither did I. Paul's mind is much cleverer than mine. You know, some people, they speak with such high language.

And I say, boy, I need another translation. You heard of that story, Ethiopian eunuch, who was traveling in a chariot, reading the Bible. And Philip says, do you understand what you're reading? And he says, how can I understand unless someone gives me a modern translation? So that's it.

It's not exactly like that in the Bible, but anyway. So I want to read it to you in the modern translation. It is in Christ.

He speaks here about a long range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in Christ. And then it says, listen to this, it is in Christ that we find out who we really are. That I can understand.

And what we're supposed to be living for. You know, all this people talk, there's a phrase in psychology called identity crisis. It's not important to know it.

But anyway, the point is, people don't know who they are, what they're supposed to be. It's in Christ that we know who we really are. When you say God has put me in Christ.

You know, we don't think so much about that phrase in Christ. I am in Christ. It's like what human illustration shall we use? Marriage is one of the best.

Supposing a girl was married, most eligible bachelor in the country. One girl got lucky. She got married to this person who's so powerful and so good and so rich and everything else from a human standpoint.

Boy, everybody envies her. And that's my position in Christ. If the people of the world could really see, you know, there's a veil right now, they can't see it.

But if the veil were lifted and they could see who I really am, they would envy me. Because I'm in Christ, not because of what I am. It is in Christ that I find out who I really am.

And it says here, long before we first heard of Christ. When was the first time you heard of Jesus Christ? Think about it. Maybe as a child, many of you.

Because your parents were Christians. Many others were from non-Christian homes much later. But long before you heard of Christ, he had his eye on you.

Have you heard of boys who have their eyes on certain girls? The girls don't have a clue that they're always looking at some particular girl. Even when they're sitting in the meeting, their eyes are going there. Yeah.

You know, somebody had his eye on me. I didn't even know it. Jesus.

My bridegroom. Imagine. Now, usually when boys have their eyes on girls, they look for somebody who's pretty and slim and walks nicely and things like that.

But I wasn't pretty. I didn't walk nicely, spiritually. And in fact, my walk was all crooked spiritually.

I was lame. I was ugly. Boy, this wonderful, handsome man had his eye on me.

Think of it. Long before you heard about Christ, he had his eye on you. Can you think of the security that brings to a girl to know that mine is not an arranged marriage? My husband really loved me.

I'll tell you this. A lot of Christians, when I look at them, I think their relationship with Christ is like an arranged marriage. They are somehow sort of, what to do, we're pulling through.

But not mine. My marriage with Christ is a love marriage, I'll tell you that. He had his eye on me, and I discovered that.

And now I've got my eye on him. And we are very happy with each other. We'll never divorce.

People ask, do you believe in eternal security for myself? I say yes. I don't know about you. But for me, I believe in it.

I'm not going to divorce Jesus, and he'll never divorce me. But when I look at some people getting married today, I don't know whether they'll divorce each other. I don't know.

But even my earthly marriage, I'm not going to divorce my wife. So eternal security for me is a very personal thing. I can't say about you.

But I know my relationship with Jesus, because he had his eye on me. And not only he had his eye on me, he had designs on us. He planned and manipulated.

You know how that also, some boys are very clever in doing that. They plan and manipulate things so they get the girl they want. I mean, boys are very clever.

But the way boys do it is not the way Jesus did. I remember when I was in the Navy, you know what sailors are. I saw those boys around me, young men, young naval officers.

They knew that the way to win a girl, and I want to say this to girls, be very careful. First of all, flatter her. Oh, you're like a Miss Universe.

Or, you're so pretty. You're so smart. She may be dumb, but you don't say that.

Say, you're so smart. You're so spiritual. You're so heavenly.

There's something divine about you, all this. And she's already half knocked out. You know, like the boxing ring, you've got to knock them out for the count of ten.

Five is already gone. Now, knock them out further, the remaining five. Tell them some sob story about yourself.

You know, I've suffered a lot. And I've gone through this. Nobody understands me.

These are the tricks people used in the Navy. They used to brag about it when they came to the naval officer's room. And that's how many young girls have fallen.

Don't let that happen to you. The old tricks. But Jesus didn't have designs on me like that.

He told me the truth about myself. And he loved me, just as I was. And he loved you, just as you were.

He had designs on you. Plans for your welfare. Most men, when they want to marry somebody, they are thinking of themselves.

Ah, this girl will take me. I can look at this pretty face everywhere, every time I get up in the morning. Or this person who's rich will make me happy.

Jesus was not like that. No. It was a spiritual marriage.

And that's how every true Christian marriage should be. Based on spiritual values. That's how Jesus had his designs on me.

He was honest with me. And he loved me. And he said he would change me.

And he never sought anything for himself. That's how he chose me. And now he blesses me with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places.

He says what you need is spiritual blessing, not earthly blessing. Boy, what a wonderful thing it is to be able to follow Jesus like this. And to live for him.

Who would not live for a savior like this? For a brother like this? Isn't it a pity that we are so half-hearted in our devotion to him? Isn't it a pity that we are up and down and up and down when we should be growing in devotion? And our love for him must be like a flaming fire. Seek for blessing in the heavenly places and not on earth. It's a spirit of Babylon that makes a person say I'm married to Christ.

But then seeking for. Imagine if you're married to the most wonderful man in the world. And then you go hankering after somebody else because he can give you something.

Maybe this wonderful man in the world is not so rich. But you hanker after somebody else because he's richer or something like that. There's something wrong there.

It's very serious. Maybe you're married to Christ and we hanker after earthly things. And we think these earthly things will make us happy.

And you find your happiness that you got something earthly. What is it that will make you really happy? If God were to appear to you in a dream tonight. And say quick! In 15 seconds tell me one thing that you want.

And you have no time to think. What will you say? I hope from the depths of your heart. Your prayer will be.

Lord I want to be like Jesus. It doesn't matter whether I live in a hut. It doesn't matter if my job is small.

But I want to live like you. I want to be like you. He has designs on you.

He has his eye on you. You're precious. And he's blessed you with every blessing of the Holy Spirit in the heavenly places.

And if you seek it there it's all yours. But you got to go and cash it. You got to go and say.

Jesus purchased this for me. It's mine. I want it.

You know we can go to heaven's bank and ask for every blessing of the Holy Spirit. Because it's purchased for us. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father. Help us to honor you. Help us to put you first.

To repent of all those things in our life where we dishonored you so much. In the past where we sought our own. Lived for ourselves.

Manipulated people. Deceived people. Thank you Father that you never deceive us.

You love us. Help us to live in your light. We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

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