

# (God and Man) Building Fellowship in Christ's Body

by Zac Poonen

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*To grow spiritually, we must prioritize fellowship and relationships in the body of Christ, walking in the light and being transparent and honest with others.*

**Duration:** 56:08

**Scripture:** Ecclesiastes 4:9, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 4:14, James 4:6

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Humility"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not comparing oneself to others, but rather comparing oneself to what they could have been with the resources of God's grace. The speaker references Ecclesiastes 4:9, which states that two are better than one and can accomplish more together. The sermon also discusses the need for spiritual growth and maturity, as mentioned in Ephesians 4:14. The speaker highlights the importance of having a realistic understanding of one's own abilities and not overestimating oneself. Additionally, the sermon addresses the issue of seeking validation from others and encourages individuals to have a humble perspective of themselves.

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## Transcript

Let's turn to Ephesians in chapter four. It speaks here about the necessity of growing up spiritually. Ephesians four, verse fourteen, As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness and deceitful scheming.

But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects, into Him who is the Head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. To stop being children and to grow up involves two things. Like we were saying the other day, there is a vertical element to it and a horizontal.

Both of these are mentioned here that we grow up to Him who is the Head, even Christ. And as we do that, we find that the Head is connected to all the other members of the body and the body itself grows. It says here in the last part of verse sixteen, the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

So there are two growths spoken of here. One is growing up, verse fifteen, into Him who is the Head, even Christ, and the other is the growth of the body. And that teaches me that it's not possible for me to grow up personally in my life into the Head, becoming more like Christ, if I'm not related to and concerned with the growth of the body in which God has placed me.

And I believe this is the reason why many people do not grow personally, because they are seeking for individual growth. They are not concerned about the growth of the body in which God has placed them. And a lot of believers don't belong to any body at all.

They attend churches, like people visit restaurants for having a meal. You don't belong to that restaurant, you go there for having a meal. So a lot of people visit churches exactly like that, to get a message, to get some spiritual help.

And then there are others who may imagine that they are part of a body, just because they go to a church that talks about the body of Christ, but there is no commitment to the growth of the body. So any imagining that we are growing spiritually, vertically into the Head, even Christ, without a horizontal growth in fellowship, the concern for the growth of the body in which God has placed me, is a deception. I cannot grow up to the Head without growing along with the body.

And that is one of the distinct things of the New Testament. Last Sunday I was mentioning that one of the great distinctives of the New Testament is to have a hidden life with Christ, where it's not just external, inward, hidden, where other people can't see. Another great distinctive of the New Testament, of the New Covenant life, is a relationship with other members in a local body.

And that local body of Christ is so important, because all believers will admit that they are members of the worldwide body of Christ. That doesn't require any commitment. I mean, I belong to my fellow believers in many countries in the world, who are part of the body of Christ, and a major part of the body of Christ has already gone to heaven, in death, and I belong to them too.

But that doesn't affect me in any way. They don't bother me. I cannot make them grow.

I never see them. They never see me. But the one place where members of the body of Christ meet one another frequently is the local church.

And you realize that you meet with other believers in this church more frequently than you meet with other believers even in this city, leave alone in this country or other countries. So, I cannot grow in the Lord as God wants me to. To the fullest extent, without growing along in my relationship with other people in the body of Christ in which God has placed me.

Now, this is the truth. We'll all agree to it. But it's a question whether we are as eager to build relationships and fellowship as we are to grow spiritually in the vertical direction.

I think all of us are interested in growing in the vertical direction, to be filled with the Holy Spirit, to have rivers of living water flowing through us, to have a very close relationship with Jesus, to hear His voice, and many things in the vertical direction. But the reason why those things are on a hold, on a hold means God's placed the brakes on that, because He does not see a corresponding desire in many to build fellowship and to grow along with other members in Christ's body. Now, in the Old Testament it was not like that.

You know, Elijah didn't need anybody. John the Baptist didn't need anybody. They were just out on their own.

And it's possible even today for a person to advance a lot spiritually on his own. Definitely. And he can even be better than a lot of other believers who are in churches, even though he's alone.

And he can pat himself on the back and say, well, I'm better than these fellows who seem to be valuing fellowship. That may be true. But he's not better than what he himself could have been if he had valued fellowship.

That's the difference. See, it's like a very brilliant student studying in some third-rate school, getting sixty percent, coming first in the class and satisfying himself that he's first in the class, he's better than all the others who got forty-five, fifty. But he has got such ability that he couldn't get ninety-five or ninety-eight.

But he never attains to that because he's always comparing himself with other people who are getting forty and fifty and fifty-five. Never compare yourself with other people. Compare yourself with what you yourself could have been if you had availed of all of the resources of God's grace.

And that's the thing that should humble us constantly. Not where I am in relation to other people, but where I am in relation to where I could have been if I had availed of all of the resources of God's grace, one part of which is fellowship with my fellow believers. It says in the book of Ecclesiastes, in chapter four, Ecclesiastes chapter four, it says, verse nine, two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor.

Or as the Living Bible says, two can accomplish more than twice as much as one. In other words, one plus one is not two. One plus one can be much more than two.

And part of the reason is that two is better than one is because if either of them falls, verse ten, the one can lift up his companion, but woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. See, most of us, you know, we all have this human nature to, tendency to get closer to God only when we are in difficulty or in trouble. And when things are relatively easy, we tend to drift.

In the same way, even in the horizontal direction, we tend to seek the counsel of the elders only when there is some problem, not at other times. In other words, just like we go to God only when there is a problem, and the other times we don't go. A lot of people go to the elders also for counsel only when there is a problem, not at other times.

Now that's not God's will. It's not God's will even in our relationship with Him. I mean, I'm not supposed to go to God only when I have a problem.

I'd like to have fellowship with God when I have no problems. If it's only when I have a need, I mean, if your only interest in your wife is when she can cook the food or do something for you, that's not a good marriage relationship. And if my interest in my fellow believers is only when they can do something for me, that's like a man who got married because he wanted his wife to cook, or wash the clothes, or produce children, or something like that, only what she can do for him.

Not for who she is as a person. Such a marriage is not a happy marriage at all. And in the same way in the church, I'm not to seek fellowship with others thinking of what they can do for me.

No. It's because they're members of Christ's body. And I'm related to them.

I want to build a relationship with other members in the body of Christ. And I'll tell you something. The root of all our sin is selfishness.

Selfishness is the opposite of love. Love is, if God is love, Christ is love, we can say Adam is selfishness. All of Adam's children, every sin they commit in their life, comes from the root of selfishness.

It's where self is the center. And if that is not dealt with, we're not really going to grow like God wants us to. And there is no place where selfishness is manifested in all its ugliness, like when we try to fellowship with somebody.

I think most people who are married will admit, if they're honest, that even if they thought they were very, very unselfish when they were single, they discovered how selfish they were when they got married. And that's why a lot of people, when they don't have a happy marriage, they always blame the other person. It's very easy to see the selfishness in the other person, not see it in yourself.

It's the same in the church. When we can't build fellowship with someone, it's very easy to blame some problem with the other person. And a person who is like that will never build fellowship.

No. No matter how long he sits in the CFC, all his growth will be imaginary, like a bubble. One day it'll burst, and he'll realize there was nothing there.

No, even though the balloon was so big, when it bursts, it's nothing. Because the principle for fellowship is the same as the principle of our fellowship with God. It says in 1 John 1, 7, if we walk in the light, as God himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

And the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. See, what does God want from me? Fellowship. He doesn't want my service.

He's not like a selfish husband who wants his wife to cook and wash the clothes and do things like that. God's not like that. God says, even if you do nothing, I want your fellowship.

Very rare to find a husband like that who'll tell his wife, even if you do nothing in the home, I want your fellowship. But that's the ideal marriage. And that's the marriage God has with us.

He says, well, I'm not interested. What you do for me, the Lord says, I want fellowship. And that fellowship is possible only if we walk in the light with God.

Let's think of our fellowship with God. To walk in the light means many things, but let me just mention two things. First of all, it means I don't hide anything.

I'm transparent. I'm not, there's no guile in me. I'm not pretending.

If I have God, if I'm trying to play games with God, for example, if I pretend that I'm very devoted to the Lord and really all I'm interested is getting God to bless me in various ways, God's not fooled. And God may bless me because He blesses all human beings. But it doesn't mean anything.

It doesn't mean that God's fooled by my desire for, by my real desire. He knows that I'm only interested in what I can get out of Him. I must be transparent.

And that applies also in our mutual relationships. Through all these years, now we've been building the church for 27 years in different parts of India, and I'll tell you my testimony. Fellowship, I found it very easy to fellowship with people who are not artificial, who are natural, who are not pretending to be spiritual or trying to talk spiritual language or act holy.

Natural. Not worldly. I'm talking about natural as opposed to artificial.

You know, that means a person is himself. He doesn't pretend to be something he's not. And I found it so easy to fellowship with such people, even if they are new believers.

And I found it very difficult to fellowship with some who've been with us for so many years because there's always something artificial about them. They're always trying to act spiritual, talk spiritual language. And I just want to wait to get away from them.

Because it doesn't go anywhere. There's no transparency. So I would say to all of you, my brothers and sisters, seek with all your heart to be transparent.

I don't mean that you have to let other people know everything about your private life. That's not transparency. That's foolish on earth.

There are a lot of things about your life which you should not tell other people. Not even your wife or your husband. Because total honesty is not very often a good thing on this earth.

In heaven we can bear it, but on earth we can't. So transparency doesn't mean that I want to know all the stupid things you did in your life or you want to know all the stupid things I did in my life. That won't help you.

It won't help me. Transparency means just I am not pretending. That's openness.

I'm not pretending to be something I'm not. You know, like we read in the book of Revelation 21 that Jerusalem, the church, is like a cube. You know the difference between a cube and a square? A square has only got two dimensions.

Cube has got three dimensions. And the interesting thing about a cube is that its depth is the same as what you see in front. If I were to hold a cube here in front of you, you can only see the square.

But if I turned it round to the side, you'd see the depth is exactly the same as what you see in front. Now if I hold this book in front of you, it looks pretty big. But when I turn it round, you find it's not so big.

It's pretty thin. That's how a lot of believers are. When you look at them, boy, they're pretty spiritual.

But you look into their life, it's not much depth. Sometimes it's like paper. No depth.

But Jerusalem is a cube. You know, it's square here. You turn it round, it's got the same depth.

That's the type of person God wants in heaven. That's transparency. It may be a small cube.

You can have a one inch cube. That's okay. One inch in the front, you turn it round, it's one inch.

You know, a young believer, no pretense, and after some time he may become a two inch cube. Little bigger, you turn it round, it's two inches depth too. That's how we should grow.

But when we desire the honor of men, we have this great desire for this front to become so big, and the depth remains one inch all the time. Then we end up like this. Big in the front and no depth.

And it's very difficult, it's my testimony, to fellowship with such people. I mean, I say hello, praise the Lord, if they come to me for some advice, I give them advice and, you know, we go through the curtsy of talking to one another. There's no fellowship.

There's no bonding. Now I have to say that's true of many people as far as I'm concerned, even in CFC. I don't have fellowship.

I have friendship. I love all of them, but fellowship, I really have with very, very few. One of the main requirements is transparency.

Be yourself. Don't try to act spiritual. It's very difficult to fellowship with such people.

Be yourself, recognize the limitations God has given you. If you've got only one talent, don't pretend to have two. Okay, you've got one talent.

It's fine. What's wrong in that? God only gave you one. Why do you have to pretend that you have five or ten or get high thoughts about yourself? Be satisfied.

Say, God gave me only one. I'm going to use that one. That's transparency, honesty, recognizing our boundaries.

We express it in various ways. That's part of walking in the light. It says that's how we have fellowship with God.

And I believe that's how we have fellowship with one another because in 1 John it says earlier on that the whole purpose of John writing this, he says in 1 John 1 is that we may have fellowship, you may have fellowship with us, verse 3, and our fellowship is with the Father. So he speaks in verse 3 about two dimensions of fellowship, vertical and horizontal. And the principle of fellowship is the same, walking in the light.

So I want to encourage all of you, brothers and sisters, seek with all of your heart to be natural. Get rid of all this artificiality, spiritual language, you know, trying to impress people with religious language and finish with that. Just be yourself.

Be transparent. Be guileless. The people who stand with the lamp on Mount Zion are those who have no guile in them at all.

And I'll tell you that's not easy to reach there because we live in a world where in the office, in the school, everywhere there's guile. Everyone's pretending. You go to school and the teacher's pretending to be very smart even when he or she doesn't know the answer to something.

And the children pick up that from childhood. We're just surrounded with people who are always pretending that they know everything when they don't. It's very rare to find someone like that.

A college student once said about a professor in his college. He asked the professor a question. Some tough question.

The professor said, I can answer that in three words. I don't know. And the student said, My esteem for that professor went up so much that day because he was honest enough to say what he didn't know, he didn't know.

And that gave me a tremendous confidence that what he did speak, he spoke from knowledge. It's wonderful to be like that. To say, I don't know.

You notice in your own, if you're honest with yourself, you notice how you like to give your opinions to, particularly to people who are younger than you. Just ask yourself how you talk and behave to people who are younger than you. Do you try to give them the impression that you know everything, you've got the answer to everything? That's part of Adam's nature.

It's deception. It's guile. It's pretending to be something you're not.

And you cannot build fellowship with that type of... I believe that we should be so transparent that we can even build fellowship with a little child. Why not? Jesus could fellowship with little children. It's transparency.

Complete lack of pretense. No desire to impress people with my knowledge, or my gift, or ability, or... And no guile. The second thing about light is that when we come into God's light, just as we walk in the light as He is in the light, the one unmistakable proof of it is that we are floored.

Floored. We get full on our face with a sense of our own need. That's what happened to Abraham when he fell on his face.

That's what happened to Isaiah when he came to the light. That's what happened to Job. That's what happened to Jacob.

That's what happened to David. That's what happened to Paul. That's what happened to John in the book of Revelation.

Every single person, when they actually came into the presence of God, they had such a sense of their own shortcoming, a need, when they fell on their face. John says, like a dead man. I mean, he was 95 years old, and one can imagine that he must have been an extremely spiritual man by then.

Way beyond all of us. Imagine a man who has walked with God for 65 years. But when he saw Jesus, he just saw his own need, the most spiritual man on earth, and he fell down aware of his own need.

That's another mark of a man who is walking in the light. He is tremendously aware of his own need, and that's what builds his fellowship with the Lord. You know, this is the thing that will build your fellowship with the Lord.

Be transparent. And the second question I would ask you is, are you seeing your own need? If you are not, you are not in the light. See, in the darkness, you can't see your own need.

No. If I have a spot on my shirt, I won't see it in the darkness. I can only see it in the light.

So, the same principle applies in the horizontal relationship of fellowship. What is the greatest requirement for fellowship? One I said is transparency, the other is a sense of my own need, not the other person's. Do you get it? See, the Pharisees could not fellowship with anybody, because they were always aware of

somebody else's need.

Or the problem is somebody else's life. They couldn't build fellowship with anyone. It's because they themselves were not in the light.

There was no revelation of their own need. They could only see the problems that were in other people. And of course there were problems in the other people.

The woman caught in adultery was caught in adultery. There's no doubt about it. But what the Pharisees did not see is their own need.

And when you see a problem in somebody else, that problem may be right. You may be absolutely 100% right that there is a problem with that person, but it doesn't solve your problem because you don't see your own need. See, when the devil accuses us to God, and what he says is absolutely right.

If you're carnal and he says you're carnal, it may be right what he says. But he's still the devil, because he doesn't see his own need. And that's why the Pharisees were very close to the devil.

They didn't realize it. They thought they were close to God. But they were close to the devil because they had the spirit of finding the sin in somebody else and not knowing it in themselves.

This is the reason why fellowship is not built, because when we walk in the light, we see our own need. Do you think two people who say, I'm going to pursue love, I'm going to pursue love, can fellowship with each other? No. Because one person says, I'm pursuing love, but the other fellow is not.

Okay, let's say two people are pursuing humility. Can they fellowship with each other? One person says, I'm humble. The problem is the other fellow.

He's not humble. You take holiness. One says, I'm holy.

The other fellow is not holy. That's our problem. But when it comes to being poor in spirit, that is acknowledging our own need, you can't say that.

You can't say, I'm poor in spirit, but he's not poor in spirit. Because the moment you say that, you yourself are not poor in spirit. You understood? You can say, I'm humble and he's not humble, I'm loving and he's not loving, I'm holy and he's not holy.

But you can never say, I'm poor in spirit, but he's not poor in spirit. Because the moment you say that, you're not poor in spirit yourself. Because being poor in spirit means, I don't look at that other person's need.

I see my own need. This is the fundamental problem with Christians. They are so aware like the Pharisees of the needs of people around them, not aware of their own.

And the reason for this is, they are not in God's light. And that's why the Bible says, I beseech you brethren, not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think. You know there are exhortations like this in the New Testament.

If anyone thinks he's a somebody, when he's a nobody, he deceives himself. Galatians 6 or Romans 12. Don't think of yourself more highly than you ought to think.

Why are there such exhortations given to Christians in the New Testament? Because the Holy Spirit recognizes that all Christians have a tendency to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think. And all Christians have a tendency after a while, to begin to think that they are somebody when they are nobody. I mean, it's not the day they are converted.

The day we are converted, we all are nobodies. But after a few years, to varying degrees, we begin to think that we are somebody. Then the problems start.

And that's why it's really true that many believers, some of the happiest days of their life were the days when they were first converted. After that is mostly miserable. Because, you know why? Because in those early days, they were nobodies.

Nobodies are very happy. Nobody can offend them because they are nobodies. But after some time, they become somebodies.

Then they get offended. They get hurt. They want to be consulted.

They want to give advice to people. It's all because they become somebodies. And then there are endless problems in their own life and they cause endless problems for other people also.

But when you walk in the light, you'll always be a nobody. You know that? In fact, that's one of the tests of whether you are walking in the light. Let me ask you a straight question.

You answer that to yourself. Do you really feel that you are a nobody? You answer that to God and you'll know whether you walk in the light or not. Let's look at what the Apostle Paul thought about himself in 1 Corinthians chapter 4. 1 Corinthians 4. Sorry, 1 Corinthians 3. You know, Paul was concerned here in verse 4 about some people saying I like Paul and I like Apollos.

I belong to Paul and I belong to Apollos. He was trying to show these Corinthians that in the end of the previous verse you're walking like mere men. He said you're all babies.

That means I like to fellowship with Paul. But Apollos, I can't fellowship with him. It's difficult.

Somebody else says I like to fellowship with Apollos but Paul, difficult to fellowship with Paul. He says if you're like that, that's one of the clearest proof that you're a baby. You're walking like all human beings.

Human beings also say I like the BJP or I like the Congress or I like the BSP or I like somebody else like that. He says you're also like that. You're walking like mere men.

I like Paul. God has put Apollos also in the body of Christ but I can't get along with him. How's that? Did God make a mistake? God can get along with him.

How is it you can't? Are you more spiritual than God? You got to ask yourself. And somebody says I like Apollos but I don't like Paul. Do you feel like that? Do you find yourself You know, Paul and Apollos were elders.

Do you find yourself gravitating towards one elder and not to another? That doesn't tell you anything about the elders. It tells you something about yourself. It tells you that you're a baby.

You're walking like all human beings in the world. Then Paul says What is Apollos? What is Paul? It's a service. Verse 6 I planted Apollos watered but God caused the growth.

Now listen to this. So then the one who plants, that's Paul and the one who waters, that's Apollos are both zeros, nobodies. So what did Paul call himself? What did Paul think of himself? He said, I'm a nobody.

This mighty man who raised the dead, who wrote scripture, who established churches if you got inside his heart and tried to see what he thought about himself there it is. He thought he was a nobody. And that's the reason why God could use him so mightily.

So mightily till the end of his life because till the end of his life he considered himself a nobody. He said, OK, I planted, I'm a zero. Apollos planted, he's another zero.

God He's the only thing that matters. And it's because He's there that He gives value to me. Otherwise I'm nothing.

It's like that old illustration. You probably heard it. OK, supposing I put ten zeros here.

How much is it worth? How much? There's no catch here, don't worry. It's zero. Whether you put one zero or ten zeros, it's zero.

But if you put a one in front of it, boy, that makes a difference, doesn't it? Suddenly, His value is shot up. That's God. And He's collected this bunch of zeros and He wants to give us value.

But you remove that one and you who thought you were ten million or something like that, you suddenly discover you're not ten million, you're only a zero. That's exactly what Paul is saying here. What is Paul? What's Apollos? By themselves, zeros.

But God comes in there and puts a one and then we've got some worth. But God goes away and we're back to zeros again. It's wonderful, my brothers and sisters, to live in that awareness till the end of our earthly days that we are nobodies.

No matter how long we've been in the church. You know, I've seen this with different elders in some of our churches. You give them a little extra responsibility and all of a sudden, they begin to think they're somebody.

And it's just a matter of time before they fall. What, you've heard me ask this question before, what is the most difficult thing for God to do? It's not to create the universe. It's to bless a man and keep him humble.

I'm convinced that is the most difficult thing for God to do. To bless a man, that's easy. To keep him humble is also easy.

Don't bless him, let him suffer, suffer, suffer, suffer. He'll be humble, don't worry. But to bless him and keep him humble, oh, that's really difficult.

Difficult for God, I'll tell you. He who created the universe finds it so difficult to bless somebody and keep him humble at the end of having been blessed. For a man to be used by God and to remain humble, that's a very difficult thing for God to do.

You know that. God uses you a little bit, goes to your head, and then you go down. And that's the reason why, you know, many people say, what to do brother, my experience is up and down and up and down and up and down and up and down.

Why is it like that? Is that God's will? It's not God's will. God's will is steady upwards. But it's up and down because you're humble, God gives you grace.

And then as God gives you grace, you get blessed and you become proud and God resists you, you go down. And when you go down, you're in all types of problems, and again you humble yourself, God gives you grace. And you come up and God blesses you with His grace and again you become proud and you go down again because God resists you.

And some people spend their whole life like this. You understand? The most difficult thing for God to do is to bless a man and keep him humble. Because he doesn't walk in the light.

He doesn't come into God's light and see his need in his relationship with other people. He does not esteem the other person as more important than himself. Do you know there's a command like that? In Philippians in chapter 2 it says, Philippians chapter 2 verse 3. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceits, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself.

What a word! Then it says, that's the attitude Jesus had, verse 5. In other words, have the same attitude as Jesus had. Now notice, he's not saying you must pretend that everybody is more spiritual than you are. That would be impossible.

Jesus did not imagine that Judas Iscariot was more spiritual than him or Peter was more spiritual than him. That's not the word. Paul didn't imagine, oh these Corinthians are more spiritual than me.

That's a lie. God doesn't ask us to believe a lie. If you are more spiritual than somebody else, you are more spiritual.

Paul could tell the Corinthians, you're carnal. That doesn't mean Paul wasn't humble. The command is, consider other people as more important.

Important is a worldly word. It's a word of the world. Who is more important? And you know there's a lot of competition as to who is more important.

You can have a competition in a choir as to who is more important. Whose voice is more important. You can have a competition in a church.

Who is more important? Consider the others as more important than yourself. This is true Christianity. But a person who walks in the light has no problem with that.

Absolutely not. Jesus had no problem when that's why he was born in a stable. He had nothing to glory in.

Do you know the number of things we glory in? You could have abilities that human abilities that exalt you, that you glory in. There's nothing wrong in having those abilities. Supposing you are more intelligent than somebody else, what can you do about it? But if you're proud of it, if it makes you look down on someone, then you're like these people in the graduates fellowship.

They can only fellowship with graduates. It's not the body of Christ. In the body of Christ there are Greeks and barbarians.

And I believe the salvation of many very very clever intelligent people is in fellowshipping with a few barbarians whom God has chosen. That will be their salvation. It's been my salvation.

I happen to be among those who are little intelligent and I found my salvation is in fellowshipping with those who are not so intelligent. I happen to be among those who are little civilized and cultured and I find my salvation is in fellowshipping with people who are totally uncultured and barbarians and valuing them, esteeming them as more important than myself, not more civilized than me. I'm not fooling myself.

I am more civilized than them but esteeming them as more important. Can you do that? I want to tell you I really believe that's a problem we face in CFC Bangalore. We live in a very sophisticated city, sophisticated atmosphere in the colleges and schools and in the homes.

We always want the best in everything because the world around us is like that and that's why we don't become spiritual. That's why I say for myself anyway God has given me fellowship in many villages in India with downright poor people and there are a lot of things I learn. I go to their homes and when I see their mud floors and thatched huts I realize that a lot of stupid things I glory in in my house are not important at all.

You can have them but if you begin to glory in them you're going to lose out spiritually. There's nothing wrong in having anything. The problem comes when you begin to think that that's got some value.

It doesn't. Esteem others is more important than yourself. Many things which in the city of Bangalore, in the atmosphere in which we move, which we think are so important are not so important.

You know how our children go to schools which are posh and westernized and there are other children who go to more Indian schools and there is a difference. There's a difference in their language and their accents and we can imagine that when we come to CFC we must have a certain accent and we must speak in a certain way and that's the only way that's acceptable. It's a lot of garbage.

It's a lot of garbage. Just be yourself. And in us striving, particularly young people, in us striving to be like somebody else we destroy ourselves.

I think this is a problem more among some of our younger sisters where they want to come up to a certain standard they destroy themselves and they can even face problems later on in the sense that they'll never find anybody to marry. There's nobody like them because they've become so posh and so up there that there's nobody like them. We've got to be a little more ordinary.

We've got to humble ourselves and recognize that a lot of things which we value God doesn't value at all. Consider others as more important. We think we have financial needs.

You know why? Because we live only in Bangalore. If you go down and mingle with our own brothers who come to the conference from other parts of India you'll discover you're pretty rich. You don't have financial problems.

Those are the people who have financial problems. See, this is how we can live in a world of deception after some time. And we don't realize, you know, we're living in a cocoon thinking that we're very spiritual

and we're not.

Walk in the light. Esteem others as more important than yourself. Be rooted in low thoughts about yourself.

Don't think you're a somebody when you're a nobody. Have a sober estimate of yourself. Have a sober estimate of how interesting you are when you get up to speak.

I found that through the years in many parts of this country. Many people don't have a sober estimate of how much content they have to be able to give to God's people. Very few people I've found in my life, even in our churches, even though I've preached about it so much.

Everybody has a feeling we've got a lot more to give than we actually have. And everybody has a feeling that they're a lot more interesting than they actually are. And if only they could get the opinions of others.

You know, sometimes I wish in all of our churches, all those who preach God's word, we could get a secret ballot from everybody. It has to be secret, otherwise it won't be honest. Please say how interesting so-and-so is or how boring so-and-so is.

How long do you think such and such a brother should speak, or how long? Even in the conferences in all our churches. I tell you, it would really sober up a lot of even the elders in many churches. Oh, is that what everybody thinks of me? At last when they were given the opportunity for a secret ballot, I found out the truth.

So, it's not just ordinary brothers and sisters. A lot of elders have that problem too. You know, I'm just using an example.

It's not elders. I mean, if elders have that problem, can you imagine how much more many of you have it? This feeling that I have, I am somebody which hinders fellowship. What's the solution? Come into the light.

Recognize that in God's presence, we're nothing. We are nothing. We were nothing.

We are nothing. We'll always be nothing. But because God is that big one in front of us, He got some value.

That's the only thing that'll have value. Take Him away, and we're back to zero again. Always keep that before your mind.

Never forget it. You're not as important as you think you are. You're not as spiritual as you think you are.

It's good to have a sober estimate of ourselves, and that's no problem at all if we walk in the light. And with such people, it is so easy to fellowship. Such people never get offended.

No matter what happens, they don't get offended. You know who gets offended? Those who feel that they are somebody. I'm somebody.

They get offended. You get offended when your children are corrected because you think your children are somebody. It's all rooted in a fantastically high opinion we have about ourselves and our children and our families.

And when the balloon is pricked, we get offended. Think how blessed it is to be with our face in the dust and say, well, I'm nobody. My children are nobody too.

I'm not offended. Yeah, brothers and sisters, let's pursue that way. It's the way of glory and fellowship.

That's the way. All those who walk this way, the body of Christ will be built among them. [www.cfcindia.com](http://www.cfcindia.com) and at [punan.org](http://punan.org) forward slash zac that is p-o-o-n-e-n dot o-r-g forward slash z-a-c for video messages, audio messages, and books by Zac Punan that can all be downloaded freely.

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