

God's Full Purpose

by Zac Poonen

The full purpose of God is to manifest all the colors of His glory through Jesus Christ and the church, and this can only be achieved by becoming one with Christ and with each other through humility and sacrifice.

Duration: 1:18:09

Scripture: Isaiah 66:1

Topics: "Church Growth", "Biblical Obedience"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of building the church according to the New Testament standards, focusing on humility, obedience to God's word, and the need to tremble at His word. It highlights the significance of following Jesus and the apostles' examples in financial matters, preaching, and church practices, while encouraging a deep reverence for God's word and a commitment to building the church in line with biblical principles.

Transcript

So, as I was saying, we had as our theme for the last conference proclaiming the full purpose of God and if you didn't see any of it, we had a little diagram with the seven colors of the rainbow in a circle, with seven segments of the circle, you know, all the different colors and I was saying God in his great wisdom put seven colors in white and if you look at them individually, violet and green and blue and red, they don't look like white at all. They look the opposite of white and who would think red is in white or violet is in white but it's a combination of seven colors that makes white and when we think it's a very beautiful illustration of the glory of God which has got many many facets to it and many aspects to it and the only person who could manifest all of it was Jesus Christ. It says, John says, the word was made flesh and we beheld his glory.

That means we saw all the colors of the glory of God in one person and so that was the first body of Christ, Jesus himself and it didn't come in, you know, the body of Christ didn't come to earth with great pomp and show like it wasn't born in a palace, there's a wise man, the only place where those wise men were foolish was when they came to Jerusalem and thought the body of Christ would be in the palace and it was not in the palace. The last place they expected was a cow shed and I thought of it like this, I don't know hundreds of miles all the way from Iran or somewhere they started out from and when they came, the star is a picture of God's word, followed, followed, followed, followed, came to Jerusalem and at that point they said, oh, we don't have to follow the star anymore. Jerusalem, we look for the palace, the king

will be there and he was not there and because of that they got delayed in going to Bethlehem.

If they had not delayed and just followed the star and not their own reason, they may have had the wonderful joy of seeing Jesus born in the stable, in the cow shed, like the shepherd saw. But we read in Matthew chapter 2 that by the time the wise man went there, he was not in the cow shed, he had left it, he was in a house. I would have liked to see Jesus in a cow shed, in fact the angels from heaven told the shepherds the one sign of the saviour of the world being born is that you'll never see another baby anywhere in Bethlehem in a cow shed, that's the only mark, I mean there's so many babies in Bethlehem because so many people had gone there for census, Jesus was not the only baby.

But you'll only see one baby in a cow shed and the wise men missed it because they followed their reason, just for a short point, short place. What I learned from that is, you follow your reason after some time, you say, hey, I know it, I mean, I got a little bit of the word of God, now the rest I'll follow my reason. You may not lose all that God has for you, but you lose a little bit.

But as you follow all of God's word, implicitly, without question, you'll get all that God has for you. So there are a lot of things we can learn from that, and that the first body of Christ was not born in a big, even today it's not seen in cathedrals and big buildings, it's in small little groups here and there, that the body of Christ, the beginning of the body of Christ is. So, the glory of God was seen in Jesus in its fullness, and then he died and went up to heaven, and resurrected and went to heaven, and then he poured out his Holy Spirit, and on the day of Pentecost, another body of Christ was formed.

The first one was physical, this one is spiritual, and the spiritual body of Christ, it's many different, those first 120 people were together, the body of Christ, now no single man was the body of Christ, that is only Jesus, there's never been any other single person who is the whole body of Christ since then. Ever since then it has always been a number of people. The first time 120, the church was 120 people, filled with the Holy Spirit, and each would be manifesting some different aspect of the glory of God, but together they would manifest the whole glory of God, like Jesus did.

So this was the distinctive feature of New Testament Christianity. Not victory over sin, we have preached victory over sin so much, because that is the stepping stone to the body of Christ, but if you stop at victory over sin, you haven't understood the whole truth, you know the full purpose of God. Victory over sin is like having a healthy member of the body, okay the hand is healthy, but if the other members are paralyzed, what's the use of having a healthy hand? So there have been through the centuries, many people have preached holiness, John Wesley preached holiness way back in the 18th century, he was really a godly man, one of the godliest men that Christianity has seen, but if you read John Wesley's writings, there's almost zero mention of the body of Christ, zero mention of being built together, zero mention of apostles and prophets, so many things that Paul spoke about, somehow John Wesley missed, Martin Luther missed, Martin Luther was a great man of God who proclaimed justification by faith in the 16th century, but even he missed a simple thing like water baptism, he baptized children, John Wesley baptized children.

I've often felt that if John Wesley was living in Bangalore, India today, I would visit him very frequently to have fellowship with him, such a godly man who knew the Lord so well, but I would never be able to work with him in the church, because he would baptize children and I'd say, John Wesley, I respect you a lot, but I'm sorry, we've got to have separate churches, you run your Methodist church and I'll run CFC, because we can't agree on baptism, one baby is born in the church and you'll want to baptize him and I'll say, no, we don't baptize children, but yet, when it comes to godliness, I learn a lot from him, the same

thing with some great saints like Andrew Murray, he wrote a book on infant baptism, godly man, preached holiness, so I found through the years, there have been a lot

of people who preached holiness, Andrew Murray and all were in the Charles Finney and all were in the 19th century, 200 years ago nearly, but the full purpose of God is not just holiness, for example, let me show you what it speaks about, in the New Testament, you find a word called mystery, 1 Timothy 3, 16, it speaks about a great mystery, now, in the New Testament whenever you read the word mystery in the New Testament, I want to read this verse in the Living Bible, great is the mystery of godliness, 1 Timothy 3, 16, 1 Timothy 3, 16 in the Living Bible reads like this, here it says, great is the mystery of godliness, mystery means, the definition would be a truth that is hidden, like Jesus said, from the clever and the intelligent, but revealed by divine revelation to those who come to

God like babes, Matthew 11, 25, Jesus said, I thank you father, you have hidden these things from the clever and the intelligent and revealed them to babes, what do babes have that clever intelligent people don't have, humility, Jesus picked up a child and said, humble yourself like this child, clever intelligent people around the world, I've always seen, are usually quite proud of their intelligence and their cleverness, some manifest that pride in arrogant ways, try to show off, some are secretly proud, that I'm not a dumb guy like this other guy sitting here, and they may not say it, but they feel that way, I'm a smart guy, I'm not so stupid like some of these others, I won't swallow all this, you know, and those people never come to know the truth, where God sees genuine humility,

like a child, those are the only ones who will understand the truth, because those are the only ones who get grace, and those are the only ones who actually get victory over sin, so mystery is a secret that God reveals to those who really humble themselves, whether they are clever or not clever makes no difference, that's a mystery, and the mystery of godliness is that Christ was revealed in the flesh, and the word vindicated means righteous or pure in his spirit, now let me read in the Living Bible, which is very good, it is quite true that the way to live a godly life is not an easy matter, and I think we'll all agree there, but the answer lies in Christ who came to earth as a man, that means he didn't live here as God, was proved spotless and pure in his spirit, spotless and pure in

his spirit, and that spotless and pure spotlessness and purity was not just observed by people who saw him, but by angels, beheld by angels means angels who see us all the time, even your wife doesn't see you all the time, your husband doesn't see you all the time, your parents don't see you all the time, angels see you all the time, you know something you're doing in secret which you're ashamed of, angels see you all the time, and if angels can see you're spotless and pure, the next step is God himself, but the next step is beheld by angels, and that is what we have preached among the nations, okay, so that is one part of the mystery of the New Covenant that you can live a really godly life, one part of the glory of God, but the other mystery, this is called a great mystery, now there

are many mysteries in the New Testament, but only two great mysteries, there's a mystery of iniquity, there's a mystery of the Kingdom of God, Matthew 13, mystery of iniquity, 2nd Thessalonians 2, but great mysteries are only two, one is this, how to live a holy life, the second great mystery is in Ephesians 5, about Jesus and his bride becoming one body, you know, and the second great mystery is the husband is, verse 23, Ephesians 5 verse 23, the husband is the head of the wife like Christ is of the church, so the Christ and the church are like husband and wife, and verse 30, we are members of Christ's body, he's speaking about the body of Christ now, not holiness, he's speaking about the second great mystery, the body of Christ, this cause a man shall leave his father and mother and

cleave to his wife and two shall become one flesh, meaning that, what's he talking about, is he talking about husband and wife, no, this is a great mystery, again that word great mystery, verse 32, but I'm actually not speaking about husband and wife, I'm speaking about Christ and the church, how does this verse leave father and mother and cleave to his wife, refer to Christ, that Jesus Christ left his heavenly father, came to earth, it's amazing, you know like it says a man when he gets married must leave his earthly father and mother and cleave to his wife, which very few husbands really do, but that's a divine pattern, Jesus left his heavenly father, with whom he had been for all eternity, and became a man and is forever a man, when he went back to heaven, he didn't give up his body

and say I'm not a man now, I'm just back to my old state of being one spirit with God, no, he is a man forever, it's amazing humility you know, it's like my deciding to become an ant, to help ants, I'm going to be an ant forever now, I'm not going to revert to my original position as a human being, I don't think we will see the extent of Christ's humility and sacrifice till we see him, when we see him we will be so astonished at the depth of his love and sacrifice and humility, which we see a little bit now, and then if we have not lived totally for him on earth, we will feel so ashamed at our lack of sacrifice, our lack of humility and lack of love and our stinginess and our miserliness in our giving ourselves to him and our calculating attitude and so many things in which we were proud,

we will really feel ashamed, I often think of that, I say Lord I don't want to be ashamed when I see you, I have many years of my life where I failed the Lord and I regret it, but of the years that are left to me, I don't want to regret that once I got light on this, that I lived a non-sacrificial life, or I lived a life with even an atom of known pride, I mean there is unknown pride in all of us, but there should be no known pride, we must ask God to give us continuous light on two things, selfishness and pride, these two are very deeply rooted in us, far more than we realize, and God doesn't give us light unless we ask him for it, if we really are desperate to say Lord show me the selfishness and pride in me, he will show it to us, because that is what hinders the building of the body,

if I have a proud attitude to another member of the body, I can't really become one with him, here it speaks about this mystery is great, verse 32, but I am speaking of Christ and the church, one body, he is the head and we are the members, and so if each of you have come to think that the new covenant message is just that we don't just get forgiveness but we get victory, I can say you have understood the ABC of the new covenant message, but you haven't understood the whole thing, that must lead on to becoming one body, why do you learn ABC?

Because you use those letters to make words, you use those letters, you don't just repeat the alphabet, you know the alphabet in order to make words, so you know holiness in order to build a body, just like you build words with the alphabet, just knowing the alphabet is not enough, knowing holiness is not enough, that's only learning the alphabet in order to build words or build the body of Christ, so I see that if we don't recognize this, we will never be able to manifest the entire glory of God because none of us can do it on our own, only Jesus could do it on his own, I am helplessly dependent on other brothers and sisters, however gifted I may be, even the apostle Paul, he couldn't manifest all the glory of God himself, he couldn't even overcome, have you read this verse, 2nd

Corinthians chapter 7, 2nd Corinthians chapter 7, we know that the apostle Paul knew how to rejoice always, that means he was never depressed or discouraged, you can't be depressed and discouraged and rejoice always, no, then you can rejoice sometimes, but always means you are never discouraged or depressed, but how did he overcome his discouragement and depression at times, 2nd Corinthians

chapter 7, you know we get depressed and discouraged when we have a lot of pressures, inward pressures and outward pressures, we live in a world where there is a lot of outward pressure and inward pressure and they are mentioned in verse 5, when we came to Macedonia our flesh had no rest, we were afflicted on every side, conflicts outside, fears inside, all of us face situations in the world where we

have conflict in our place of work, with unbelievers, with other believers, conflicts outside and then all of us face situations where we have fears and anxieties inside, if you are honest we all have to admit we face situations where we are tempted to fear and anxious about some situation how will this turn out, but God helped us to overcome, how did God, the word comfort means strengthened, from the F.O.R.T. is there in comfort, that means strengthened like a fort, God strengthens us to overcome our depression by sending Titus, one we would have thought Paul said well God just gave me a sudden infilling of the Holy Spirit and helped me to overcome my depression, no, it was through Titus coming and encouraging me, now who is Titus, is he some senior brother, much older than Paul, no, he

is a junior co-worker of Paul's, Paul the great apostle was encouraged and strengthened by one of his junior co-workers coming and encouraging him, so that is something which really shows us how Paul was part of a body, even his overcoming life came through fellowship with other members of the body, in this case Titus and many other situations you know, for example when he first went out in his ministry, God said I can't send Paul alone, he may be very gifted and all that but he has to go with Barnabas and there was a balance, because I think Paul is a very strict man and by himself he would have manifested one aspect of Christ, God's strictness against sin, God's severity and discipline and all that, but the other aspect of God's gentleness and graciousness and mercy needed another

person like Barnabas to manifest that and so when they worked together, the glory of God was seen full of grace and truth like in Jesus, in Jesus it was seen perfectly, but there is no human being on the face of the earth, not even the apostle Paul who could manifest it perfectly, he needed a body, the Old Testament prophets, they all operated individually, they never worked together with anybody else, right through the Old Testament, Moses was a lone man, Joshua was a lone man, David was a lone man, Isaiah was a lone prophet, Jeremiah was a lone prophet, there were other prophets in Jeremiah's time, there was Huldah prophetess and there were other prophets like Habakkuk and Zephaniah who prophesied about warring Israel against going to Babylon, but they never worked together, they could

not work together, because the moment they start working together they get into conflict, nobody in the Old, no two people in the Old Testament could become one, no husband and wife in the Old Testament could become one, and when a New Testament husband and wife are not one, they are like an Old Covenant couple, in the New Testament you are supposed to be one, or become more and more one, but I find a lot of even New Testament husbands and wives, they are more one on the day they are married, they really love one another, and every year after that they drift further and further apart, just like Old Covenant people, it shouldn't be like that, I mean if you are one on the day of marriage, every day after that it should be more and more and more one, if both take up the cross, and that's

very rarely seen, I mean I've hardly ever seen a married couple that's more one with each other, say 30 years after they are married than they were in the beginning, superficially yes, but in a deep unity, there are a few, praise the Lord, in the same way in a church, a church should become more and more one as time goes on, just like a married couple, and unfortunately what I see in many churches, is they become more and more apart as time goes on, and marriages they divorce and sometimes churches just back up, but that means they have not seen, they have seen maybe individuals in that have seen the great mystery

of godliness, how I can live a holy life, and maybe they are living a holy life, but they have not seen the second mystery of how to become one, Christ and the church becoming

one, and maybe great apostles like Paul don't see that they need young brothers like Titus, or they don't see that they need another brother like Barnabas to balance them out, see this is the great danger when we, when God has really blessed us and given us revelation and helped us to understand so many things that other people haven't understood, even in our own church, we can begin to think that we are really somebody, that's exactly what the devil wants you to think, you are really somebody, and the moment you begin to think like that and you think that I don't need these other folks, they need me but I don't need them, you can be pretty sure the devil has taken over your thinking, I will tell you why, because see what Jesus says, this is a great verse, I don't know whether you have

seen this, 1 Corinthians 12, in 1 Corinthians 12 it says, there is a great chapter on the body, 1 Corinthians 12 verse 12 onwards, the body is one but it is one, have you seen this verse, read it carefully, slowly, though there are many, 1 Corinthians 12 verse 12, they are one body, he is talking about the human body with many members, so also is, not the church, so also is Christ, this is the only place in the whole New Testament where the church is called Christ, it is always Jesus who is called Christ, but here the church is called Christ, did you notice that, even as the human body is one but has many members, and all the members of the body are one body, so also, we should think so also is the church, but it says so also is the Christ, that means the unity between, you know like, I

said my head is Zachariah and my body is Zachariah, that's what it means here, the head is Christ and the body is Christ, it's an awesome title, me being a part of Christ, me representing Christ, see like my fingers and parts of my body represent Zachariah and Zachariah, in the same way, as a member of the body of Christ, I represent Christ, very few people have seen it, that's why they are so careless about sin, that's why they are so careless about their relationships with one another, that's why so many husbands and wives don't bother about their relationship with one another, they haven't seen the second mystery, I tell you in my life, there are very few preachers I've seen who have understood the second mystery, the first one about holy life, you know there are people preaching it

even 200 years ago, but this mystery of the church being one body, which is part of the full purpose of God, that means like the seven colors of the rainbow, we can say holiness is one color of the rainbow, yeah, let's say it's red, red is one of the seven colors of the rainbow, which make white, but it's not everything, I don't neglect it, some people are taken up with evangelism, we must reach out with everyone the gospel, great, I believe in it, let's say that's blue or something, blue is one color, but it's not everything, and so if we see a child is given a circle with seven segments and some of those segments are colored in the colors of the rainbow, rainbow violet and indigo and blue and green, and you tell the child who understands the seven colors of the rainbow, now fill up the

other segments which are missing, and a little child will not think of the other colors, a little child will select his favorite color, my favorite color is blue, so I'm going to make it all blue, or my favorite color is green, I'm going to make it all green, that's how a lot of Christians are, my favorite task is evangelism, that's all I'm interested in, I agree brother, evangelism is very important, but that's not all there is in the church, read the New Testament, or another fellow says my favorite thing is holiness, that's all there is in it, no, that's just one aspect of it, and a lot of people are taken up with one truth which is missing and make it the whole thing, just like some people take evangelism, make everything evangelism, some people make holiness, that's everything, but

there are different segments in the body of Christ, and I've got to see what is missing here, I know in our churches in India, we saw that the message of discipleship was missing, and the message of building people into one family, and demonstrating a family relationship in a local church was missing, in all of India, so we felt that God's calling us to color these segments of the circle which are not colored, why should we keep coloring the things which are already colored, there are some segments that are blank, you know, inner life for example, we hardly, I don't think in my whole life I ever heard anybody preaching on anger, or taught me what is the difference between sinful anger and righteous anger, you know it says in Ephesians 4, 26, be angry but don't sin, that means there's an

anger which is righteous and an anger which is sinful, and nobody taught me that the way to distinguish is when you, like in English when you don't understand a word, you go to the dictionary, what's the meaning of this word, serendipity, I've never heard that word, there is a word like that by the way, you look up the dictionary and you find the meaning of serendipity, oh I never knew that word, and you, like that you see something in scripture, righteous anger, we like to classify all our anger as righteous anger, so that we say I'm overcoming sin, when I got upset with my husband or my wife, it was righteous anger, and the wife says I also had righteous anger, it's all deception, I say if you want to know the truth look up the dictionary, and for us the dictionary is Jesus, the word

became flesh, here in the Bible the word is a word, it's black ink on white paper, the word is black ink on white paper, and when the word is black ink on white paper I may not understand it, but if I take that word and see how it was in the flesh, I understand it, so then I look at Jesus and say, where do I see anger in him, oh he was angry when he saw people making money in the name of religion, and when I see TV preachers making money in the name of religion I should be angry, if I'm not angry at them I'm not like Jesus, how many people understand that, a lot of people watch these TV preachers and say oh they are not so good, Jesus didn't look at these money changers in the temple and say oh they are not so good, he was really angry and chased them out, and I say every time I see these

fellows swindling poor people of their money, I'm angry, and the more I see the more angry I am, and I believe I'm like Jesus, and he was angry when they would not allow a man with a withered hand to be healed, when I see so many people with withered defeated lives in so many churches and the pastors won't let them hear the message of victory, I'm angry with them, okay that's righteous anger, where was Jesus not angry, when they called him a devil, so if people call me names I shouldn't be angry, when they spat on his face, if somebody spits on my face I must love him and say, father forgive him, so I understood from looking at the dictionary, Jesus, what is righteous anger and what is sinful anger, sinful anger is where somebody hurts me, speaks about me, or my family, or does evil to me

or speaks against my family, if I get angry I'm sinning, I must just forgive, but where it touches the glory of God, the name of Jesus is being dishonored or in the name of God people are making money, there I should be angry, but what have I seen among Christians, I'm talking about born again Christians, I see them getting angry when somebody speaks against them or speaks against their church or speaks against their family and then I don't see them angry when I see these pastors making money in the name of religion, I see you guys got it all upside down, you're just like the worldly people, you don't have any righteous anger in your life, all your anger is sinful anger, I never heard one sermon on that in my 54 years as a believer, so what are people preaching, I never heard one single

person talk strongly against lusting after women and pornography and all that, I hardly ever heard anyone preaching against it, what are they preaching then, and then I never heard people saying how we can be

built together into a body, what it actually means to take up the cross every day, you go and ask the average preacher, what does it mean to take up the cross every day, I don't think you'll get a correct answer, I never found one in practical terms explaining what it means to take up the cross every day, which means to deny your own will to do the will of God, I never heard, and yet do you know that the Bible never says you must pray every day or you must read the Bible every day, but it says you must take up the cross every day, I was taught in my younger days to read the Bible

every day, that's good, to pray every day, good, but the most important thing Jesus said, take up the cross every day, nobody taught me, so I'm just saying there are so many things that are so important in the New Testament that are completely left out, and I found a lot of preachers were preaching what the Old Testament preached that God will make you prosperous and God will make you healthy, that is not the New Testament message and no wonder the body of Christ is not built because you can't build the body of Christ is an Old Testament message, and so I see here one more thing which I want to show you 1 Corinthians 12, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, verse 13, is to make us one body, you know the whole purpose of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is to make us one body?

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is like a fire, on the day of Pentecost 120 pieces of iron were thrown into the furnace and came out as one piece, you can look at it like that, the fire of the Holy Spirit melted them into one, so the baptism in the Holy Spirit is something that makes us into one body, and then it says the foot cannot say to the hand, oh I'm not a part of the body, the ear cannot say to the eye, I'm not a part of the body, and here is the most amazing statement of all, I don't know whether you've noticed it, the most amazing statement, one is that so also is the Christ, in verse 12 I showed you that, the second most amazing statement is here in verse 21, the last part, Jesus the head does not say to the lowest member of the body, the feet, I don't need you, if there was

ever anybody who could have said I don't need you, it was Jesus, he could turn around to all of creation and say I don't need you, but it says the head, the feet are the lowest member of the body, that means Jesus does not say to the lowest, weakest, most useless member of the body of Christ, does not say I don't need you, and that is what we need to also learn in the church, I was saying somewhere about a little drama that my family and I did for our local church in Bangalore many years ago, we had a picnic once and each family was asked to do one item, you could do a little drama or you could sing a song, so my children were all small those days and the youngest was maybe four or five, and we decided to do a little drama with a message, so I asked one of my four boys to act like a

retarded child who couldn't speak anything, but say la la la la, that's all he could say, and I said okay, now you're going to act like that, right, and the drama is how shall we prepare for the church picnic, what item shall we do, and it's part of a drama, and we said okay, we'll sing a song as a family, so we're going to sing count your blessings, name them one by one, so I said let's try it out now, so we all try to sing together, count your blessings, name that one, and this retarded child just makes some mumble jumble and all, and the other three boys say hey dad, tell him to shut up, otherwise he'll spoil the whole our presentation, because he doesn't know how to sing, you got to tell him to keep quiet while we're singing, that's the only way we'll have a good performance, I said

if you reject one member of our family, because you say he's retarded, then you guys are retarded, not him, an intelligent person, a loving person, will include every member of the family in some way, in any project that we do, in any drama that we do, so we are not going to exclude him, but we're going to make it sound more beautiful with him, than without him, okay, how shall we do it, that's where you need to use

your intelligence, okay, now I said this is the way we're going to do it, while we sing each line, he'll be quiet, but at the end of the one line, he'll say la la la la, then we sing the next line and he will say la la la la, so we sang like this, count your blessings, name them one by one, la la la la, count your blessings, see what God has done, la la la la, I said doesn't

that sound much better, then just he's got, he brings in a little melody at the end of it, and like that we sang the song, then at the end of the drama I said, this is how it is in the body of Christ, some weak brother comes, someone who feels, he's a little shy, he's not this outgoing smart type, like some of the others, spiritually you can think he's a little retarded, he doesn't talk much, he's a little shy, or maybe he's defeated, he's still struggling with some sin, and spiritually he doesn't know so much of the Bible, there's so many ways in which you can say a person is spiritually retarded, a good church will make that person welcome, and encourage him to become a member of the family of God, because he loves Jesus, I mean his handicaps are in other areas, he's not living in sin,

he wants to avoid sin, but he doesn't have the gifts that other people have, maybe he sings out of tune, so what, we make him welcome, we got a brother in our church who always sings out of tune, even after 30 years, he can't sing one line straight in any song, I love him, because he loves the Lord with all his heart, and you know sometimes he starts a song completely off tune, and everybody wonders how to sing this when this guy has started the whole thing off tune, you know what happens, I've seen it happen again and again, he'll start off one line of his song completely off tone, and we know we can't sing it like that, another musically minded brother will sing that line again, and start it on the right tune, and we sing it, I said this is the body of Christ, where one person's

weakness is covered up by another, and he feels so welcome in that church that he's bold enough to start any song now completely off tune, I say Lord thank you, we have built the body of Christ here, we're a family, and that is the church, and that's just one example, the head cannot say to the feet, I don't need you, I mean you know if your one hand is paralyzed, the other hand does the work of two hands, it doesn't complain, hey the left hand is not doing anything, I'm not going to do that job, what does your right hand do, haven't you seen people who are deaf, their ear is not functioning at all, but their eyes become so sharp, they can pick up things, they can watch a person speaking, and without hearing anything they can find out what he's saying, because their eyes are so sharp, and

you watch a person's mouth speaking, you don't know what he's saying, because we are so dependent on the ears, and vice versa, people whose hearing is very sharp, their eyes are blind, their hearing is very sharp, so one makes up for the lack in the other, I see that's the body of Christ, that's the type of family the Lord's building, and it's wonderful to be a part of that, and I've almost never seen it anywhere, but I said Lord this is the body of Christ, and this is what we want to build everywhere, and we don't want to just talk about it, a lot of people who preach so many things, I say I want to see a demonstration, show me someplace where it works, a lot of people, even I've seen even a lot of people who have come to CFC conferences and heard my messages, they say yeah we've

understood it, maybe you understood it, but let's see you demonstrate it, you see if you say, I watched Jesus working as a carpenter in Nazareth, and I've seen how he makes a table, and I can explain all the theory of a table, I say let's you make one, that's the test whether you understood it or not, not just that we preach about how to make a good table, I find a lot of people are doing that, they hear the CFC messages and they preach it, I say let's demonstrate it brother, make a table, let's see when you make a good table that people can appreciate, something that's steady and stable, so the great need everywhere is for living

expressions of the body of Christ, where we value one another and we are willing to you know the right hand is not so proud that I sign all the checks and I do

all the important work my left hand is not so important, no but values the left hand and say hey you may not do things I do but you're very important to me and you know for example you play the piano, you can't play just with one hand, you need two, and so this recognition of the value of the other, even the right hand plays the melody, the left hand has to play the chords and that's the way music sounds nice, so there's a dependence on others who may not be able to do the things that you can do, and it's so rare to find that type of expression of the body of Christ where some people think body of Christ is, oh we'll have a meeting where we let everybody speak that's not it, I mean I don't say okay my left hand is as, I'm going to make my left hand also valuable, I'll sign some checks

with my left hand, the bank won't accept it because they say whose signature is this, so it's not by giving people, making people do something they're not gifted for in our conferences, I don't let everybody get up and speak because they're not gifted, I say that's like you know we have a brother who's excellent at cooking food for the conferences, he does a first-class job, so I say supposing one conference I get him to speak and I do the cooking, I say nobody will come for the conference next year because the sermon was not good and the food was also not good, but if I let him do his job and I do my job we do it perfectly, so it's not that one is, you know the food in the conference is as important to me as the sermons, I mean people need to eat and they need to come together somebody

takes care of the accommodation arrangements and different functions in the body of Christ are all equally important, someone can lead the singing and I can't lead the singing as well as them, so I see that some people have got a tremendous ability to just care for people and counsel people individually, I know some people who cannot preach at all but are very good at personal counseling, that's their gift, some people are just good at exhortation but not good at giving a message, so I find that in the body of Christ we need to demonstrate in a local church, functioning together as a body of Christ, for example I've taken the example of Paul when I looked around India, you know we started our work in India, most of our work is still in India I almost never, I can say almost never found

any well-known preacher who was supporting himself, like the Apostle Paul, they'd all say, the Bible says the labourer is worthy of his hire I say I'm not against your giving gifts to God's servants, Paul himself received gifts from the church in Philippi I'm against people becoming so dependent on other people paying their salary that they cannot speak the truth because the people in the church are paying their salary and they've got to please them and that's what happens in so many pastors, they cannot speak the truth anymore because somebody in the church is paying their salary, now how in the world can they tell them the truth so to find it, I say Lord I want to find a church where there are people like Paul who are apostles, who don't depend on others for their salary, who depend on

the Lord and also proclaim the whole counsel of God, it's almost impossible to find it's almost impossible to find in America or any other country, some parts are there I say but show me a man like Paul who could teach the scripture, supported himself, planted churches appointed elders and did it exactly like in the New Testament, Paul said follow me as I follow Christ and I found people doing this bit a little bit or that little bit but I say is it not possible in the New Testament to have churches like this where we have elders who are supporting themselves and leading the congregations that's how we started seeking and today we have 40-50 churches like that not one or two I asked myself is it possible to have the same financial policies that Jesus and the apostles had, you see finance

is a big area because Jesus said there are only two masters, Luke 16:13, he said there are only two masters, God and money, it's not God and the devil, we may think it is God and the devil nobody thinks he can serve God and the devil but there are people who think they can serve God and money but Jesus said you cannot, you cannot serve God and money, like in the Old Testament Elijah said you must either choose Jehovah or Beal, one of the two, you can't serve both, today Jesus said you cannot serve God and money, the equivalent of Jehovah and Beal in the Old Testament is God and money in the New Testament, so when I looked at the financial policies of the apostles and Jesus Christ, Jesus was supported by others, you read in Luke chapter 8 verse 2 and 3 that even Herod's palace manager gave

money to Jesus for his ministry so he was supported because he couldn't do his carpentry like Paul was doing tent making so there's nothing wrong in that but I mean there's nothing wrong in a Christian worker being supported although there should be some like Paul who are not supported by others but one thing that was common of Jesus and Paul and Peter and James and every one of them was they never sent out any reports of their work in order to get money, not even once I mean Paul wrote so many letters but not in one of them does he say this is the report of my work over here and here and here, please consider supporting it Christendom today is filled with millions of letters like that that's one thing I saw and Jesus also never said you know I'm doing a great work, what about you guys

thinking of supporting my mission, never once did he send out a letter like that or ask for that anywhere, now today that has become so common in Christendom that a younger generation grows up and they say yeah I suppose that's okay, how can you say it's okay when Jesus and the apostles didn't do it, that's because we have a younger generation growing up today who just don't know the Bible, they watch so much television and heard so many television preachers, they don't know the Bible, they don't know the New Testament, they don't know the New Testament standards and they think yeah this seems to be alright, it seems to be alright according to your wisdom but it's not alright according to scripture, so I said I want to see how Jesus and the apostles did it I have what I call a four-fold

test for everything, everything, number one did Jesus do it number two did Jesus teach it, number three did the apostles do it, number four did the apostles teach it, very simple, easy to remember, did Jesus do it, did Jesus teach it, did the apostles do it, did the apostles teach it and if on all four the answer is no, Jesus did not teach it, Jesus did not do it, the apostles did not teach it, the apostles did not do it, for example this pushing people down that you see so much in a lot of charismatic Christianity, some preacher lays hands on somebody and they fall down, I never see Jesus teaching it or doing it, I never see the apostles teaching it or doing it, so I say I'm sorry I don't want it, you can call it what you like, I don't believe it's of the Holy Spirit, I wonder how many

people would test everything they do by this four-fold test, a lot of people who you think are great preachers, just test them by this four-fold test and you'll find they're not like Jesus or the apostles, then what are they like, they've got their own pattern, but young people who don't know the Bible admire them, wow, they say what an anointed, anointed with what, the Holy Spirit, more anointed than Jesus and Paul, doing things that Jesus and Paul never did, it's ignorance, the devil is capitalizing on the total ignorance of today's young people, younger generation on scripture, they don't have a standard to guide their thinking, for example, this you know is yellow, this wall, but there's a color called off-white, which is not pure white, a little bit like ivory and you can look at it

and say, hey that's a white wall, it's not, you compare it with pure white and you suddenly discover it's not white, it's a sort of ivory color, there are wash basins for example of ivory color, they're not white, they're

not dirty, it's just an ivory color, so it's only if you compare it with pure white that you know, hey this is not, you compare an ivory color with yellow and say, hey that looks like white, but it isn't, it's the same way when we compare one preacher with another who's much worse than him, you say, hey this fellow is more Christ-like, yeah but compare it with Christ, compare it with the apostles and you say they're not Christ-like at all, so I see that Jesus for example, not only never sent out any reports of his work, the other thing Jesus never did was he never took

an offering, in all the multitudes of healing meetings and public meetings, he never took an offering, I say that's amazing, can we run a church without taking an offering, most people say no, we've practiced it for 37 years in 50 churches and seen it works, and you know we've had a conference now every year, now we have a conference in Bangalore recently and you know India is a poor country, our conference cost \$20,000 just four days, we never took an offering, we never asked anybody for money, we just keep a box there, why do we keep a box, because I see in the Bible that you know the widow went and put a mite in the treasury box and Jesus was sitting and watching it, I see that is a pattern, not somebody going around with a bag in front of people, there was a box and Jesus sat beside

and watched it, and I say it's the same today, you keep a box, the reason is because Jesus said everything you give to God must be secret, nobody must know that you gave, if you put a bag in front of someone they know that you are giving, and then it's no longer secret, but if you get box in the bag nobody knows who gives when, how much they put, it's possible for a person to come to a church 20 years and put nothing, and it's possible for another person to put a lot, we don't even know who it is, nobody gets credit for it, there are no names, there are no envelopes with names on it to find out how much each person is giving, nothing, the other thing Jesus said was, the Bible says is whenever you give to God you must give cheerfully, now if you stick a bag in front of somebody you don't

know whether he's giving cheerfully or naughty, I mean he may be giving because he's embarrassed, other people are all watching me, I better put something in, so there are two things particular about giving in the New Testament, one it must be secret, the other it must be cheerful, and we discovered the only way to do it is by not taking a collection in a meeting, but putting a box there and say, well if you want to give, give secretly and cheerfully, if you don't want to give, don't give anything, fine, I preached this in different places and I've had pastors come to me, even last week in Melbourne, when I preached on this in a public meeting of some other group, not our church, somebody came to me and said, how can you say that we should not tithe, I said I'm 100% against tithing

because there's no such command in the New Testament, the Bible says you must give cheerfully, not how much you give but how you give is important in the New Testament, he said but then how will people give, I said I've practiced this for 37 years in 50 churches with expenses far more than you have and God's provided on me, how is that, I said when people love the Lord they give If you love your wife, you'll spend any amount, if she's got a medical treatment, supposing a medical treatment costs \$100,000, you'd spend it because you love your wife, you don't have to go around taking a collection, and where you love you'll give, think of the amount the parents spend on their children's education, who teaches them, it's love, love where a person loves his wife or loves his children, they'll

spend such a lot to train their children in so many ways, such a lot of money training them with music and education and everything else, what is it that's motivating a mother or father to spend so much on their children, love, why can't we believe that in the church of Jesus Christ, people will love Jesus so much that they will do at least that much for Jesus which they do for their children, I say we believed it and we've

experienced it, but that's how the early church was, you know Paul never took a collection anywhere and people sometimes gave him, he accepted it in Philippi, they sent him more than once, he took it, people gave Jesus, he accepted it, but he never mentioned his needs and he never asked people for money and if people ignored him he was not disturbed by that, it's one

of the sad incidents, I don't know whether you noticed the sadness of I think how could people do this to Jesus, you probably heard me speak on it in John chapter 7 after he preached such a powerful message, you know he shouted out, if anyone is thirsty let him come to me, verse 37, 38, from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water, one of the most powerful messages on the fullness of the Holy Spirit, at the end of that wonderful message it says in verse 53 everybody went to their own home, John 8 verse 1, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, they were in Jerusalem, Jesus home is in Capernaum and nobody asked Jesus, Lord where are you staying tonight, it was a strange town, nobody asked him and everybody went home and finally Jesus is all alone, nobody's invited him to home

to sleep in their bed or any such thing, it's never happened to me, everywhere I go people take such good care of me but Jesus, I felt so sad, I said Lord how thoughtless these people could be that you traveled all the way from Capernaum to Jerusalem to preach a message and nobody bothered to ask you where are you staying tonight, so he went out and slept under the trees in the Mount of Olives, can you imagine the greatest preacher in the world, he went out and slept under the trees and he had no complaint, next morning, chapter 8 verse 2, he comes back and he doesn't sort of hint, you know last night when I was sleeping under the trees you know how preachers can hint about their inconveniences or their needs, not a word, he just continued to preach, he was teaching them, he began to

teach them and the amazing thing, nobody bothered to ask him, Lord by the way where did you sleep last night, no question, everybody must have assumed somebody else must have taken him, nobody took him, I see something of the glory of Jesus in these little little passages, the Holy Spirit shows me and I said Lord there was so much money in Judas Iscariot's bag, you could have used some of that at least rent a room in a hotel or something and stay for the night, there were inns those days and the Lord said to me I wouldn't do that because some of that money was given by poor widows, I wouldn't take that money and go and stay in a five-star hotel, I tell you I learned something from there, so I find that the attitude of Jesus to money as a Christian worker was so totally different from what

I see in today's preachers and that is the reason why we don't see the type of Christianity that Jesus and the apostles preached, we may think it's a small thing but I have come to see through more than 50 years of observation that if a man is not right in the matters of money he can never know the truth of God So these are some of the things we saw in the early days as a church and said Lord we want to build a church which is as far as possible, may not be perfect but as far as possible we want to follow exactly the principles we find in Jesus' life and the life of the apostles, we don't want to criticize others, we don't want to find fault with others, it's not our business, we're not judges we want to be different but we don't want to judge, so we don't judge all the other groups

there's so many groups set up, so many financial policies, it's none of our business but we want to follow what we see as Jesus' standards and even when we started the internet ministry we said everything's going to be free on the internet, so many people have written to us Brother Jack this is amazing, so many American preachers charge one or two dollars per sermon everything's free, yes because I said Jesus we freely receive, we freely give and we believe that the Lord will provide for our need, you know when we started the internet ministry it required a fantastic amount of money for all the software and the hardware

and everything required to maintain that ministry but God gave us some amazing software engineers in our church who would offer all their time free, we still had to pay

for the hardware but it's amazing how God saw there was an open door to reach the world and he provided us the people and the resources because we were determined to offer it all free anything whether it's bible studies or the sermons or the books or everything, everything on the internet is completely free for everyone in the world, not only free for them to take down and read or hear, actually you can make copies of it, distribute it to others and so long as you don't sell it to make money for yourself, distribute it free, you can make any number of copies and give it out free to others and you know I discovered that a lot of publishing houses, you know like if I give my books to a Christian publishing house and tell them can you publish these books, the first thing they'll ask is are

you offering it free on the internet, in which case we will not publish it because if you're offering it free on the internet who will buy the books we publish and that's why you find even the great Christian authors, they don't put their books free on the internet, they give it to some publishing house and the publishing house charges money for it, so what do we do, we publish it ourselves, nobody else has published it, so we ourselves published it and say we're not interested in making money on it, we publish it ourselves and sell it at actual cost price, so in all these things you know we try to make it everything, for example a lot of people come to our conferences from very, very poor homes, some of them save money the whole year so that they can travel as a family to the conference,

imagine saving money the whole year just to be able to take a train trip to Bangalore for the conference, so we say well once you come here everything is free, we'll pick you up at the railway station, take you to your place of accommodation, provide your accommodation free, provide your food free and till the last day of the conference we'll take you back to the railway station, all you have to do is buy your train ticket to come to Bangalore, after that everything's taken care of, we've done that for 37 years, what I'm trying to say is when we seek the kingdom of God first, all the other things we need are added to us and so wherever you build a church, I feel there must be a demonstration in that church of the promises of God's word being fulfilled there, as I said we're not boasting,

we're just saying we try to follow the New Testament exactly and we even tell people, do you find something in the New Testament we're not following in our church, please tell us, maybe there's some area we're ignorant, we'll follow it there also, for example people have asked me, Brother Jack, why don't you preach a sermon on healing, physical healing, I say you show me one sermon anywhere in the New Testament where Jesus preached on physical healing, I'll preach it, there's not even one sermon, did you know that?

Okay, I say show me one sermon anywhere in the New Testament that the apostles preached on physical healing, not even one, you search it, show me one, you can hardly find a verse on it, leave alone a sermon, I say that's why I want to follow the example of Jesus and the apostles, did Jesus do it, did Jesus teach it, if he didn't, now a lot of us think of course Jesus must have preached on physical healing, show me where, he healed thousands but he never preached on it You know we'd be surprised if you read the Bible with an open mind, what all you discover which are completely contrary to what you see in Christendom today, but people accept it, they say yeah times have changed, we are in the 20th century and in the early days it was different and I say nothing is different, you see 1

Corinthians 11, for example there are two halves of 1 Corinthians 11, one is about women should cover their heads when they pray and the other is about breaking up bread, everybody says breaking up bread is for all centuries but the first part is not for the all centuries, who decided that, arrogant people who think they can question the word of God, when you come to the word of God in simplicity and say Lord I'm not here to judge God's word, I'm here to obey, you find that the arrogance of people gets exposed by they listen to human arguments and you're inconsistent, I say why don't you throw out the whole chapter, no no the last part of the chapter is for all centuries, we must break bread, I'm just giving you one example, there are so many things like this we have seen, I have seen

that many people who say that they fear God, they don't really fear God, they live by their own intelligence and that's why the church never gets built in so many places, even when a lot of people listen to my message and appreciate them, I met so many people around the world, so brother Zach was so tremendously happy to hear your message is so challenging, I said do you know it says in Mark 6 that Herod liked to listen to John the Baptist, did it change him, it didn't change him but Herod would have told John the Baptist, oh John you're a great preacher, you're not like these boring Pharisees, you're so exciting, you're so fiery, did it change Herod, the same Herod would listen to John the Baptist three verses later and Mark 6 says he went and saw this half naked Salome dancing, that's

exactly how a lot of preachers are, they can listen to me preaching a powerful message and then they'll go and watch some dirty movie on the television, it's exactly like Herod, they're not serious Okay I'll read one more verse and close, Isaiah 66 verse 1 and 2, Isaiah 66 and verses 1 and 2 it says, thus says the Lord, heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool, where is the church you're going to build for me, you know we say the house of God is a church, so we can read it like that, the whole of heaven is not my house, it's my throne, did you get it, the whole of heaven God says it's not my house, it's just my throne and the whole of planet earth is just a place where I keep my feet, so heaven is his throne and the earth is his footstool and he says you guys are trying to build

a church for me, you can't do it, but I will look at this person, the last part of verse 2, whom I will use to build my church, one who is humble, contrite of spirit and who trembles at my word, that means one who reads my word and trembles because he hasn't obeyed it, I've seen very few people in my life who tremble when they read some scripture saying, hey I haven't obeyed that, I must obey it, they use their reason and say no, no, it's not so serious, they have decided to judge God's word as to what is important and what is not important, well God have mercy on them, that's all I say, but I've seen through the years people who take that attitude to God's word, in the long run it doesn't go well with them or their family or the church, because God says I look at a man who trembles at my

word, I will use him to build my house, and so I say Lord if this is the type of person you're going to use to build your house, I want all my life to tremble at your word and I want all my life to be humble and broken in spirit because I don't want to spend my life on earth in any other way but building the church, I mean if I were living in Noah's time, I would spend all my energy in building the ark, minimum amount of time taking care of my family, maximum amount of time building the ark, because I knew that's the only thing that's going to remain when the flood comes, so if you take the challenge dear brothers and sisters of building the true church of Jesus Christ, you'll find a lot of things going on in the world today which are good and a lot of good preachers, they're not

preaching the whole seven colors of the rainbow, maybe they're talking about two or three other colors, so we need to see what are all the whole counsel of God and that you'll never know unless you read the New

Testament, and then we say Lord that's the only type of church I want to build, so that's the reason why we are so strict about certain things and that's the reason why we have had some people come to Bangalore and say Brother Zach your standards are too high, I say fine you can go to some other church, there are many other churches where the standards are not so high, it's like a person coming to hospital and saying your hygienic standards are too high, we want a slightly dirtier hospital, actually fine there are other dirtier hospitals, why don't you go and go there, but we want

to keep our hospital the highest standard of cleanliness, can you imagine a person saying I want to go to a dirtier hospital because this is too clean, but that's exactly what a person says when he says your standards are too high, what do you mean your standards are too high, it's not higher than God's, we're not legalists, we're not trying to judge others, I say we don't judge others who do things differently, if somebody comes to our church and does not live by this standard, not if it is adultery or serious sin we'd immediately correct them, but there are so many other things which they may not see exactly like we see it, we don't judge them, we say fine, when God shows you the truth, do it till then we have no objection to your doing it any way you like, I remember once I was

baptizing a sister who was wearing jewelry, I had no problem, I said my wife and I don't wear it, but we don't judge other people who wear it, it's none of our business, so I baptized her, I said sure, the important thing is your heart, and six months later she took it off, and I said what happened, I said God told me to take it off, and the Lord spoke to me then said, isn't it good that you didn't tell her to take it off, because then she'd have listened to a man, and it should have been a dead work, isn't it good that she had the joy of hearing me speak to her, I learned something that day, there are so many peripheral things in Christianity which are not central, which are not got to do with sin, but obedience to little little things, and if somebody doesn't see it, I don't try to

force them to do it, because then I'll be a legalist, I may do it, but I don't force them to do it, I don't even force people to read the Bible every day, I think it's a very good thing, but if I make it a rule saying everybody in the church must read the Bible every day, and I keep checking up on everyone, did you read the Bible today, they're going to do it to please me, and it'll be a dead work, anything that you do to please a man is a dead work, the same thing if you do it to please God becomes a living work, and then only it'll benefit you, so we've tried our best that we don't get people to be so afraid of some preacher or leader that they do things right, because they'll think the leader likes it that way, you know it's crazy how some young people can be so foolish, I remember in

the early days in Bangalore, I used to wear my shirt outside the pant, and one young brother told another brother, see brother Jack, he always wears a shirt outside the pant, wearing it inside the pant is very sexy, wear it outside always, so he started that teaching, and I heard about it, you know what I did, I used to sometimes wear it inside and sometimes wear it out, to confuse people, I said I don't believe any of this is sexy or not, I said there's no style in the New Testament Church, whether you wear a bush shirt, wear it outside or inside, I said we're not a cult, but I'm just saying how this is, I'm speaking absolute truth, this is exactly what one young brother did, they can be so crazy about something, or there was one brother who tried to imitate me in the way I was

preaching, so brother Ian Robson was my fellow elder, went up to him and said listen, don't try to preach like brother Jack, first of all you can't, and if you do, you will kill your own style, God wants you to be yourself, so he changed, I'm very happy that, you see we're all different, and even my own, I say a doctrine may be the same, but our style of doing things can be different, and we don't have to follow one

or the other, we're different, but there's a beauty in the different colors of the rainbow, you know, joining together to make white, so when we can, like I said earlier, accept people who are weaker, who can't do things the way they do, and recognize that we need them, Paul needed a junior brother like Titus, and we can build a church which is like a family, where, you know,

in a family there are little two-year-old babies, and there could be grown-up twenty-year-old sons, both are equally important in the family, so that's the type of church we want to build everywhere, and I believe that's what God is looking for everywhere, and we, and everything comes out of prayer, you know, just like, I'll tell you, I prayed for 10 years in my heart, before I actually saw the beginnings of the body of Christ in Bangalore, it started in 75, I had been praying since 1965, it's like carrying a baby in your womb, some people would like to say, oh we'd like to see a church here overnight, can God find a mother there, who's got a burden, you know, a lot of people like to have babies without carrying them in their womb, a mother can never be as attached to an adopted baby, as

to one she's carried in her womb for nine months, why has God allowed a mother to carry a womb, body in the womb for nine months, because when the baby comes out, she's so attached to it, more than the father is, the father never carried that baby in the womb, a mother is more attached to the baby, because she carried it, and I say, I found the same thing, that God wants people who have a burden in their heart, Lord, I want to see a New Testament church, and I don't want to criticize others, but I want to see a real New Testament church, that follows everything that I see in Jesus' life, in the Acts of the Apostles, and I want to tell you, very, very, very, very few people have that burden, and they want to have a baby without carrying it, they want to have something happen without a

burden of prayer, it doesn't happen, and what they get sometimes is some cheap counterfeit, that looks like the real thing, you know, there are counterfeit diamonds, and counterfeit gold, and there are counterfeit churches, so we want to build New Covenant churches, that are exactly like we see in the Acts of the Apostles, and the way Jesus taught it, and we pray that we should see more of that in different parts of the world.

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