

How God Makes Us New Covenant Servants (Tamil)

by Zac Poonen

God makes us adequate as servants of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit, and takes us through experiences to prepare us for a ministry to others.

Duration: 56:21

Scripture: Isaiah 53:3, Isaiah 53:10, Matthew 8:17, Matthew 11:28, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 2 Corinthians 12:10, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Hebrews 13:16, 1 Peter 4:10

Topics: "New Covenant", "Christian Service"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of being servants of the new covenant, highlighting the need to go through trials and experiences to understand and help others effectively. It discusses the significance of giving thanks in all circumstances, being content with weaknesses and insults, and finding ministry opportunities through personal struggles. The speaker encourages a mindset of gratitude, readiness to face challenges, and a commitment to serve others with compassion and encouragement.

Transcript

Let's turn to 2nd Corinthians and Chapter 1. We read here, Chapter 3, sorry, 2nd Corinthians 3. Verse 6, God has made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the spirit. There are many expressions found among Christians which are not in the Bible. And we get used to hearing certain things which are not true.

I told you how we think we should call God Jehovah when we should call him father. Particularly when we sing something in a song and we hear it so many times, we think it is true. One example is how so many songs speak about Jesus as the lily of the valley and the rose of Sharon.

That has become so commonly accepted that you cannot even change it now. But do you know that the Bible does not say that Jesus is the rose of Sharon? If you read the song of Solomon, the bride is called the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley in Chapter 2. But supposing I stood in front of a congregation and said I am the rose of Sharon. People think I am very arrogant.

That's what the bride says. I am only a rose of Sharon. I am only a lily of the valley.

Or now take another expression. Servant of God. Supposing I ask you, are you a servant of God? Oh no no no.

I am only a child of God. Supposing you go to a rich man's house and that person says this is my daughter. This is my servant.

He will wonder what is this? You think my servant is greater than my daughter? That is a wrong idea believers have. I am not a servant of God. I am only a son of God.

So many wrong ideas we have got in our head because we don't read the Bible. We get our understanding from songs and nowadays from Christian TV preachers and many other preachers who don't read the Bible properly themselves. So many wrong ideas.

I have spent my life trying to correct these wrong ideas. And I tell people that the whole New Testament does not say you must give your tithe. And I said even in the Old Testament.

Do you know what God told people to do with their tithe? See the tithe in the Old Testament was never money because they did not work in offices and factories and get salaries. They were all farmers and shepherds. Their tithe was sheep and grain and things like that.

No it was not money. It was flocks and grain that was tithe. That means you know because there was one tribe in Israel that was devoted to looking after the temple.

So God said they must not do any farming or shepherding. So since 11 of your tribes you do shepherding and farming. When I bless you please take 10% and give it to these priests so that they don't have to work.

It is sensible. Then here is an amazing verse. In Deuteronomy chapter 14 verse 22.

You must surely tithe all the produce from what you sow that comes from the field every year. And then if the distance is so great that means they have to all go to Jerusalem. Verse 24.

If you are living far away in Galilee or somewhere You can't bring all your tithe to Jerusalem because it is so many kilometers away. That itself shows it is not money. You can't carry all these sheep to Jerusalem.

Because it is so far away then sell that and make money. I mean sell your sheep and your grain for money. Verse 25.

Then take the money there. And when you take the money to Jerusalem what should you do? Don't put it in the offering box. Go and get some wine and some strong drink and whatever your heart desires biryani or anything just sit there and eat it.

Have you heard any pastor in the world preach on this verse? They will never allow you to read this verse. That is even in the old testament. And you must rejoice in the presence of God with your family.

All pastors are against me because I show people these verses. This is old testament. God wanted people to be happy.

So different from the understanding people have. And when you do that, if you see one poor Levite there, don't neglect him. Please give him also some of that biryani and what you are drinking.

We will do that. So I am just showing you some examples. There are many things like that.

We read in 2 Corinthians 3 that we are to be servants of the new covenant. Who is that? All of you. Not me.

I am just like one of you. That is why we don't have any titles in our church. All are brothers and sisters.

We have different functions. Just like we say there are all members of this body. Some are more important like heart and tongue and all that.

But that doesn't mean the small members are unimportant. They are also members. And every member has a function.

So nobody sitting here, even the small children must not say, oh I am useless, I am nobody. Sometimes sisters think, oh what do we do? We just cook the food and that's all. You can also be a witness for Christ.

Somebody comes to your home, you can share a word to encourage them. If you have heard me speak, you have heard me speak about different members of the body. I say that the little finger is what many people say is very small and unimportant.

And in that there is a nail. That is so small and unimportant. And you can think in the body of Christ you are like that.

I am not even a little finger, I am only a nail. But when you feel scratchy somewhere, your heart, liver, tongue, nothing can help you. Only the small nail will help you that time.

So don't think you are unimportant. And the scratching ministry is called the ministry of encouragement. Can you encourage somebody? Can you scratch somebody's back? He feels so nice.

Because he cannot reach. Oh brother, please scratch my back. And how nice you feel when somebody scratches your back.

You know a word of encouragement is like that for anybody who comes to your house. All of you can be back scratchers from now on. I mean encourage people who come to your house.

Say something nice and tell them how God can solve every problem. Encourage them. The world is full of discouraged people.

Even the neighbors and all that. Everybody is complaining about something or the other. Why not you be a cheerful person always encouraging? Even if you smile at a person, that is encouraging.

It doesn't even cost you anything. How much does it cost you to smile? Nothing. I will tell you a true story.

This is a true story. It happened in America. It happened in the town where my children are staying.

We did not know this man but we heard about him. This man was so discouraged. He was not married.

He was living in a room all by himself. Very discouraged. No friends.

One day he got so fed up. There was a big bridge there. He said, I will go to that bridge and jump and commit suicide.

So he wrote in his book. Some of these lonely people write sometimes in their book, diary like. He wrote in his book, I am going to go to this bridge and commit suicide today.

But on the way, if one person smiles at me, I will turn back to my house. He walked to the bridge. Everybody was busy.

Nobody smiled at him. He jumped and committed suicide. They picked him up.

The police and all came and picked up his dead body. They found his identity card and found out where he was living. They went to his house.

They saw this diary. If I see one person who will smile at me on the way to the bridge, I will not commit suicide. If I see one person who will smile at me on the way to the bridge, I will not commit suicide.

I will turn back to my house. You know what I thought when I read that true story? A doctor has written this true story. It is on the internet.

You can read it. You know what thought came to me? I said, Lord, if I was walking on that bridge and I saw this one lonely man walking. I don't know who he is.

Would I have walked smilingly at him? Or would I have been worried about all my problems in my own head? What are we Christians supposed to be in this world for? The Bible says, cast your burden upon the Lord. He will take care of your burdens. And you lift the burdens of others.

So, it is one of the things I have tried to do in my life. I say, Lord, I want my hands to be always empty. That means no burdens of my own.

There are burdens, but I cast them on the Lord. Lord, you can handle that better than me. Let me lift the burdens of other people.

Sometimes all that people need is somebody to just listen to them for five minutes. You see, I have no gift. Have you got a ear? Even if one ear is deaf, have you got one ear at least that is working? One ear is enough.

You don't need two ears. And can you listen? Yes, that is a gift. Most people in the world have no time to listen.

They are so busy talking, talking, talking, talking, there is no time to listen. Many people, all they want is somebody to listen to them. There are many lonely, discouraged people in the world.

In your office, many of you work in the hospital. Full of needy people. So many people come from all over the country here.

You know, ask God to lead you to some of them. Especially if somebody comes to your house. Or some neighbor tells you about their problems.

Why not speak a word of encouragement? Jesus can help you. Jesus can solve your problems. Even little children, God can use them.

You got friends in school? You can tell them about Jesus. God can do amazing things. So, everybody can be a servant of the new covenant.

So, when it says here, God has made us servants of the new covenant. Everybody sitting here, even the children, you must say, God make me a servant of the new covenant. You may have different functions.

You may not be a heart, you may be just a little nail. But you can encourage somebody. And in order to make us servants of the new covenant, God has to take us through many experiences.

Because only when we go through those experiences, we begin to understand how to help other people. For example, supposing I have to go and comfort somebody who has lost their only son. Small boy died.

I can go and comfort them. I have got so many verses. I know more than you.

But if you are a person who has already lost one son yourself, you may not know as many verses as me. But you can comfort that person. You can put your arm around that person and say, I have been through this myself.

This is how Jesus helped me. I can't say that. Because I did not lose a son.

So, every problem you have gone through can become a help for you to have a ministry to other people. Have you got a difficult wife or a difficult husband? You can help many people who have difficult wives and difficult husbands. Another person who has got a good wife or a good husband cannot do that.

I remember once when I was trying to encourage a brother who had a difficult wife. But he said, Brother Zak, you can't teach me. You have got such a good wife.

That's why you can preach like this. So, what do I do? My mouth is shut then. But supposing you had a very difficult wife, he will listen to you.

So, don't think, Oh, I wish my life was so perfect like that brother's. You know, that brother cannot have a ministry which you can have. So, all that we go through is to prepare us for a ministry to other people.

I remember when I had a court case against me for 10 years. I said, Lord, that's part of my education to help other people who go through that. Everything we go through is to teach us something to help other people.

You see 2 Corinthians 1. One of the many titles of God is mentioned here as the God of all comfort. And what does he do? He comforts us in all our trials. So, do God's people have afflictions? Yeah.

He doesn't say you won't have any afflictions. He said, in the world you will have tribulations. But he comforts us in all our afflictions.

So, when you have a trouble, God will comfort you. Why does he comfort you? So that you can comfort others who are also going through trouble. What comfort will you give them? Verse 4. The same comfort which God gave you.

Have you read that verse? That the God of all comfort comforts you in your trouble. So that you can comfort others with the same comfort which God comforted you. So, supposing you went through life without any trouble.

You will have no ministry to anybody. Supposing Peter came home one day from the sea. And his children say, how is it daddy you went with Jesus today? He said everything was smooth.

The boat went safely to the other side. We came home. Oh daddy, that's so boring.

Nothing happened. But he says, there was such a storm. We were all drowning.

And we saw, we thought it was a ghost. Jesus was walking. And he told me, I came out.

And I walked on the water. Those children will say, tell us more, what else happened? So, it's good that God takes us through storms and trials and difficulties. We have a testimony to encourage other people, even our children.

God gives us comfort so that we can comfort others. For example, you are facing some, you meet somebody who's got a lot of financial difficulties. Supposing you never had financial difficulty in your whole life.

What comfort can you give them? You can give them some verses. But you can't give any comfort to them because you never had any financial difficulty in your whole life. God has taken me through financial difficulty.

He has taken me through sickness. I was so sick with asthma when I first went to Bangalore. I could not sleep at night.

I was sitting, sitting, pumping my mouth and breathing. But God healed me. I have something to tell people.

God took care of me in my financial difficulties. We struggle to educate our children. God took care of that.

Other people had no problems. They had plenty of money perhaps. We must go through trial if we want to comfort other people.

If you leave it to God, He will arrange your life like that, that you get trained to have a ministry to other people. I never prayed in my life that I should have financial difficulty. I never prayed that I should have asthma.

God gave me these things without my asking and took me through the storm and showed me how Jesus can still the storm and taught me how to help other people who are also facing the storm. So, don't ever get discouraged when you go through a trial. That is how God is going to make you a servant of the new covenant.

And the stronger the trial, the greater the comfort will be. See, the apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12, he had a thing called a thorn in the flesh. And he called it in verse 7, a messenger of Satan.

I don't know what it was. It was probably a sickness. But some type of messenger of Satan troubling him, troubling him, troubling him.

And he said, Lord, this is a messenger of Satan. This is not your messenger. Get rid of it.

You may have something which really looks like what the devil sent. And he says, this messenger of Satan kept on buffeting him. You may have something like that in your life.

You pray and it doesn't seem to go. In English the word is, I entreated the Lord. That means I pleaded with the Lord.

Please get rid of this. I have pleaded with the Lord. Get rid of this Lord.

I am your servant. God said no. I will give you something else.

I will give you my grace. And so when he realized that through this trial he can get grace, he said praise the Lord. Thank you for this trial.

Because now I am going to experience your grace in a way I will not experience if I don't have this trial. So what is he saying? Can you say verse 10? 2 Corinthians 12:10. If you can really say this, you can be a servant of the new covenant. I am well content with weakness.

Have you got weakness in your body? And you pray and pray and pray and the Lord does not remove it? Have you got a mental weakness? Emotional weakness. I don't care what weakness. We must pray.

Lord remove it. But after much prayer he doesn't remove it. And he says don't worry my grace is enough for you.

And you say ok then I am happy with this weakness. Or insults. A lot of people are insulting you and saying all types of things against you.

I am happy. How many believers can say I am happy that so many people are insulting me? Most people can't say that. They complain oh brother so many people are insulting me what shall I do? I say do what Paul did.

Be happy. God will give you grace. I am content with distresses.

Are you in difficult circumstances? Financial distress. Physical distress. And he also had persecutions which none of us have.

He was put in jail and all that. With many difficulties. For Christ sake.

Christ sake means what? The Lord wants me to have a ministry to other people in the body. You know why God has placed us on this earth? So that we can serve other people. There was a great man of God who said this.

This earth belongs to God. But he doesn't charge us any rent for living here. So what is the rent I have to pay to God? That man said the rent is to serve other people in this world.

So when you serve other people, that is the rent you pay to God for allowing you to live on this earth free. It's not just living on this earth. God has given us so many things.

You know how little children are. Whatever they may have, they are always thinking of the things which they haven't got. I read a little statement once of a boy who said, I complained because my parents did not give me new shoes.

Till one day I saw a boy without any feet. Then I said, Lord I don't want new shoes. Thank you for the feet you have given me.

We cannot teach our children to be thankful if the parents themselves are not thankful for what God has given us. One of the most important things we have to learn is to be thankful. If you want to progress in this year, just start thanking God for the many things you have.

You know recently we had a conference in Bangalore. Many people had stomach upset. Then we began to thank God, Lord for 34 years you never gave us stomach upset.

Thank you so much. Then we began to thank God, Lord for 34 years you never gave us stomach upset. Thank you so much.

We took that for granted. But when we got the stomach upset, then we thought of all the 30 years there was no problem. You know how many times this heart is beating inside our body in one day? Hundreds of times.

But nobody thinks about it. Till they get a heart attack, then they begin to think about the heart. There are so many things we have to thank God for.

We need to teach our children also. Thank God for what you have. Don't think of what you don't have.

You will become a really spiritual person. That's what Paul says, I am content with insult, distress, anything. Because I can experience God's strength in my weakness.

So God comforts us in our affliction so that we have a ministry to other people. He does that in small ways in the beginning. You know sometimes in the old testament he did it in a very stronger way with some of his prophets and his servants.

God used to say Israel is my wife. But she is such an unfaithful wife. She goes and worships idols and then comes back to me.

When she has a problem, she will come to me. When everything is going smoothly, she will go and worship the idols. And all the gold I give, she goes and makes idols with it.

So God said, Israel is like an unfaithful wife who is always going to some other man. But I still love her. I tell her to come back, I will still accept you.

How many of you will allow your wife to keep on going to some other man and come back again? God is like that. So he called one servant of his called Hosea. He said Hosea, I want you to preach this message of my love for my unfaithful people.

But in order to preach it properly, you will have to go through this yourself. Then you will really preach it with meaning. I want you to marry this woman.

She is a very loose type of woman. I want you to marry her. And he married her.

And she would go to some other man and come back. And God would tell Hosea, take her back. And again she would go to some other man and he would come back.

God said Hosea, take her back. Hosea said, this is tough. I mean, you will find it tough if you have a wife who is always going to some other man and God says come back.

Children without other man, they come back. Lord, it's difficult. But you tell me to love, I love.

Now the Lord says, Hosea, now you know how I love my people. Now you go and preach, you will really preach with compassion and meaning. Before you have this experience, you will not know how I love my people.

Some of those Old Testament servants had to go through a tough time to become a real servant of God. Hosea and all were very high level servants of God. We can serve at a lower level, but the same principle.

I must understand how God feels towards people. You know, I also had a stomach upset during this time. But not during the conference.

Because the Lord said, I know you have to speak, you won't have it now. After it was over, I thought, I'm okay. And then I also had it.

I said, Lord, why after the conference, why are you giving me now? Because you must understand what other people are going through. I said, okay, I also need it. He said, he will heal me before the Velur conference starts.

See, this is all planned by God, the timing and everything. Give me an education, I know that. So, I thank God for everything.

Everything. And I asked the Lord, I said, Lord, when you lived in Nazareth, did you have a stomach upset anytime? Or you went through life without any problems? Then you cannot understand what I'm going through now. Shall I surprise you by telling you that Jesus also had stomach upsets in Nazareth? Nazareth was not such a hygienic place where everything was so clean.

They didn't have bottled water and all that over there. It was like one of our Indian villages only. How hygienic are our villages? God did not protect Jesus from anything that we have to face.

It brought me into such closeness with Jesus to know that he experienced headaches, he experienced stomach aches, just like me. But he never grumbled, he never complained. He never made demands on other people that you must not care for me because I'm sick.

I'm sure Jesus was as cheerful and happy and praising the Lord when he had a stomach ache than when he didn't have a stomach ache. I said, Lord, I'm going to be like that. I'm a follower of Jesus.

Everything you take me through is for my education. Make me a better new covenant servant. So don't think that we become servants of God by studying the Bible so much.

That's necessary. But if you only study the Bible and you don't have any experiences, you cannot be a servant of God. So many of you are going through different trials.

Maybe you have difficult children. What a fantastic ministry you can have to those with difficult children. And you see that other brother whose children are so well behaved and nice.

Praise the Lord. But he won't have as good a ministry as you can have. Because if you have gone through a difficult situation like that and you experienced how Jesus can help you and you held on in faith, you have an experience that will bless other people.

So in the Old Testament, they just listened to God and they told people what God told them. But some prophets like Hosea had to go through that struggle and then have a ministry. But some people like Moses just listened and preached.

But in the New Covenant, every servant of God has to go through it and teach. Now who is a New Covenant servant? All of you. Children, sisters, brothers.

This is not the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant is usually only men. Definitely not children.

But in the New Covenant, God will pour out His Spirit on your sons and daughters. Sons and daughters, 12, 13, 14 years old. God will pour out His Spirit on them.

On men and women. We can all be servants of God. It's a wonderful honor and privilege that we have.

So dear brothers and sisters, let's make this a year where we never complain anymore about our circumstances. Everything we shall give thanks because we say, Lord, you are allowing all this for my good. And you are going to use me to bless other people who come across my path.

Everything you are going to use to bless other people who come across my path. Even Jesus had to go through many crushing experiences. Have you read this in Isaiah 53? It says about Jesus, look at some of the things he had to face.

It says in verse 3, he was despised and forsaken by men. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. That word grief actually means sickness.

Acquainted with sickness. That is the correct translation. You read if you got a margin in your Bible, it says the correct word is sickness.

He was acquainted with sickness. Otherwise he cannot be our example. And then it says in verse 4, our sicknesses he bore.

Again that word is sickness. Because when you read the same verse quoted in Matthew chapter 8, there it is translated as sickness. He bore our sicknesses.

Matthew 8 verse 17. He bore our sicknesses. But if you go to the Old Testament, this is the verse.

It's our sickness. Same word in verse 3, he was acquainted with sickness. He was acquainted with sickness.

That is part of his education. All sickness is not due to sin. Some sickness is due to sin.

Some sickness like in Jesus case, in our case, it may be a part of our education. So that we can experience what other people go through. And we read in Isaiah 53 further.

Verse 10, it pleased the Lord to crush him. And it pleased the Lord, as the margin says, to make him sick. It pleased the Lord to make Jesus sick.

He allowed him to go through many trials which were not written here. I don't know what all he went through in those 30 years in Nazareth. But don't think Jesus preached after studying in a Bible school.

His ministry came out of 30 years of facing all types of trials and problems. And he was crushed through those problems. It pleased the Father to crush him.

And because the Father crushed him, he had a ministry. If you don't allow the Father to crush you, you won't have a ministry. I know in my life, once I understood this, I never stopped the Lord from crushing me.

If I hear somebody tell some false story about me, none of us like people to tell false stories about us. And if it is about our children, we feel even more hurt. I have learned to rejoice in all of that.

When people tell a false story about me or my children, I say, Lord, this is you crushing me. And from that crushing will come forth a ministry. So, whenever you go through any trial this year, say, Lord, I am just following Jesus here.

I cast my burden on you. Give me your grace in this trial. And help me to be an overcomer.

I don't want to be a complainer like I was last year. I am not going to complain about anything this year. I am going to give thanks.

Everything. Whatever may happen. Because God knows everything that is going to happen.

One of my great comforts is this. I don't know what's going to happen next week or next month. Something may happen next month, which is a surprise for me.

But I say, it's not a surprise to you, Lord. You knew that in February 2010 this would happen. Long before I was born, you knew it.

And you made some provision for me to be an overcomer there. Or March 2015. Or 2020.

Till the Lord comes. Anytime. Nothing is going to take the Lord by surprise.

Think about it. Do you think something will happen to you next year, which the Lord says, I didn't know that would happen? Then He has made a provision for you to overcome it. So, whatever you may face this year, you say, Lord, that's not a surprise to you.

I never thought that would happen to me. But you knew it. And you have prepared me for it.

You prepared me for it by giving me a message on January 10th. So, thank you. I am ready for it now.

Anything that will happen, not only this year, but till Jesus comes, I want to be a servant of the new covenant. God bless you. Let's pray.

While our heads are bowed in prayer, respond to what the Lord has spoken to you. Say, Lord, I am going to give all my burdens to you. And I will be perfectly content with weaknesses, insults, distresses, any type of problem.

Because I know that your grace is enough for everything. To make me an overcomer, so that I can have a ministry to other people. All of you sisters and children who thought you were useless and had no ministry, say, Lord, I am not useless.

I am an important member of the body of Jesus Christ. I want to be useful to you this year. If I can't do anything else, I will speak a word of encouragement to other people.

And even if I can't speak a word of encouragement, I will just smile at people. I don't want to be a grumbler and a complainer like I was last year. I am going to thank you, Lord.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

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