

Jesus Pleased the Father by His Humility

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of pleasing God, as seen in Jesus' example, and encourages listeners to take their Christian life seriously and follow Jesus' attitude in all areas of life.

Duration: 1:00:20

Scripture: Philippians 2:5

Topics: "Humility", "Christlike Character"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and recognizing our true position before God. It highlights the journey of Jesus from being God to becoming a man, a servant, and even a criminal on the cross, demonstrating the ultimate act of humility. The speaker uses a visual demonstration with individuals representing worldly attributes like wealth, beauty, position, education, popularity, and preaching, all shown to be zeros without Jesus. The message stresses the need for humility, recognizing that God is everything and we are nothing, leading to true fellowship and growth in the body of Christ.

Transcript

So this being the last Sunday of the year, and very soon we enter a new year, we know that the calendar is not inspired by God. So God doesn't have a 31st December or a 1st January. But yet, it was God who determined that the earth should go around the sun in 365 and a quarter days.

So there must be some meaning to it, just like He makes the earth rotate on its axis in 24 hours so that we get time to sleep, so that the sun is not up at night. And in the same way, He's determined a cycle of one year. So whether you start on the 1st of January or the 5th of April or 8th of September, it doesn't matter.

But once in a year, it's good to evaluate our life and look forward to the year ahead, to see, first of all, what progress we have made, and whether we are a little further ahead than we were, a year ago, and where should we keep our focus for the next year. So I want to turn to 2 Corinthians in chapter 5. 2 Corinthians 5, we read about an ambition that Paul says we have. 2 Corinthians 5, 9, we have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to God.

And when he talks about home, he's talking in the 1st verse, in the 2nd verse, he says how home is heaven, and we are absent from heaven right now. On earth, this is not our home. We are absent.

So when it says in verse 9, whether at home or absent, that means whether I'm at home in heaven or right now away from home, we have one ambition, to be pleasing to Him. And that's a good thing to ask ourselves in the last one year, to evaluate our life and to ask ourselves, was that our ambition in the last one year? Is that going to be our ambition in the next one year? That was the ambition that Paul had. What that means is, see, let's consider when we are at home in heaven.

If you have made Jesus Lord of your life, and you're seeking to please Him, you'll be in heaven one day. Ask yourself, supposing the Lord comes on the 1st of January, and we're going to be in heaven next year. What will your ambition be when you're in heaven? And you've left this earth, and you're going to be in heaven.

A lot of things that attract you here won't be there. Ask yourself, what will my ambition be if I were to enter heaven on the 1st of January? The Lord were to come, or somebody dies, go to heaven on the 1st of January, what's going to be our ambition there? Paul says, my ambition there will be to please Him, to please God. And that's going to be my ambition on the earth as well.

In other words, the direction in which I'm going now, I'm just going to continue the same when I get to heaven. It's not that I'm going in some other direction, chasing some other ambition right now, and then the Lord suddenly comes and I say, oh, I've got to change direction now, because now I'm in heaven. I think a lot of believers are going to have to do that.

Hey, now we're in heaven. Now we're going to have a different ambition. Those are the ones, we can say, who have wasted their earthly life.

Paul says, at the end of his life, I've finished my course. I've kept the faith. Because his ambition on earth was exactly the same as it was going to be when he got to heaven.

So that's the meaning of this verse. Whether I'm at home in heaven, or here on earth, my ambition is the same. So I want to say to all of you, my brothers and sisters, that if that has not been true in the past, make sure, at least in the coming year, I don't think Jesus is going to come on the 1st of January.

2 Thessalonians 2 says the Antichrist has got to come up and it's going to be a period of tribulation in all nations for Christians, and then the Lord will come. But that doesn't mean we relax, because the time is short. And I don't want to enter heaven having pleased him just for one day, or even one year.

I want to enter heaven having pleased the Lord for a number of years, from the time I got light. I regret the years that I spent with other ambitions. Now my ambition is going to please the Lord.

And I don't know how many of you are going to take what I say seriously. A lot of people come to CFC. They say, I like to listen to Brother Zach.

That doesn't mean they want to please the Lord. Herod liked to listen to John the Baptist. He had no interest in pleasing the Lord.

You know, some people like an intellectually stimulating message, or an emotionally stirring message. But it doesn't change their life. It's not how we understand in our mind, it's not how we feel in our emotions.

It's the decisions you make with your will. Like I've often said, the decisions you've made in all your past life, little, little decisions, have made you what you are today. And the decisions you're going to make in

the coming days, in the next year, you're going to make many, many decisions.

That will be what you finally become. It doesn't mean that we don't do things on earth. It doesn't mean that we don't have earthly ambitions.

I believe it's good to have earthly ambitions, for example, to work and earn your living. We shouldn't be beggars and parasites, dependent on others, to support ourselves, to not be dependent on anybody. That's a good ambition to have, but it's subservient to the decision to please God.

I want to do that because that is part of pleasing God. And everything in my life, there's nothing wrong in seeking to do well in your profession. It says, whatever you do, do heartily as unto the Lord.

I want to do well in my profession, for the glory of God, because I want to please God. I remember when I was in the Navy, I used to tell my senior officers, Sir, I'm working here to please God, so I'll do everything as best as I can. Not just like so many others who work, or even the bosses watching.

So, it affects every area of our life. It affects our family life, where a husband or a wife live in a certain way, to please God. We seek to bring up our children to please God.

So, the basic ambition is to please God. And that never changes. And I want it to be like that in my life, where I'm going in a certain direction, and if the Lord suddenly comes, my direction does not have to change.

I just continue in the same way, pleasing God. Please take that seriously. If you do that, you're going to have a wonderful year ahead of you.

So, when it comes to pleasing God, you know, unfortunately, as Christians, we've been brainwashed by a lot of things we have read, and you've heard lots of other preachers who have said many different things from what I say, and many different things from the Bible, who have probably brainwashed us to think that pleasing God means I've got to give money for God's work, or I have to go here and go there and witness and give out tracts. No, no, no, no. First of all, to please God is in your life.

You know, at the baptism of Jesus, the voice from heaven said, this is my beloved Son, in whom I'm well pleased. And you've heard me say many times, which you hardly hear in any other church, that Jesus never did a miracle till then, never preached a sermon till then, never traveled outside Nazareth probably till then, and never cast out a demon, never did what we call Christian work, but he pleased God. So there's my example.

All of us may not be gifted to preach or cast out demons or heal the sick, but we can please God in the way we live. That's primary. So, when we think of pleasing God, let's read a little further in 2 Corinthians 5. Verse 10.

The reason why we want to have this as our ambition is because, for means because, we all have to appear. Please remember this, brothers and sisters, all of us have to appear one day. It's like a final examination, like you tell your children.

There's a final examination coming in March. Please prepare for it. There's a final examination coming for us, all of us.

We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. There are two judgment seats mentioned in the Bible. There's the great white throne judgment seat of God, we read in Revelation chapter 20, where the unbelievers are going to be judged.

This is the judgment seat of Christ. And there will be no unbelievers here. These are believers who are being judged.

Not whether they go to heaven or not, but whether their life was pleasing to God or not. So all of us are going to be judged so that we will be rewarded. Forgiveness of sins is not a reward.

That's a free gift. But here it says we're going to be rewarded for the deeds we did in our body, whether they were good or bad. Now you know that salvation is not based on the deeds we did in our body, whether good or bad.

This is rewards. And because this is going to happen to all of us, I don't know whether all of you know that you will have to stand before Jesus Christ one day to be judged for every single thing you did in your body. The words you spoke, the attitudes you had to other people, the motives with which you did things, your thoughts, words, the way you spoke to your husband or wife.

Everything in your life is going to be judged because they're all recorded in our memory. Everything that ever you did or thought or attitudes are all stored up in our memory. We don't always remember it because we're weak.

But one day when we stand before the Lord in our new bodies, memories will be perfect. And everything that we did from our childhood on to the end of our life will be there stored up and the Lord just has to play that on the screen and you'll see everything and you will know and everybody will know whether we were good what we did, whether it was good or bad, like it says here in God's eyes. And the things that we did that were wrong can be wiped out if we have repented of it and asked the Lord to forgive us.

Turn from it and say, Lord, I'm sorry for what I did. I want you to forgive me. It's cleansed.

But we don't want to have large empty spaces on that tape. Lots and lots of evil things wiped out, wiped out, wiped out. No, that's not the way to be pleasing to God.

That's why we need to take our Christian life seriously. And Paul goes on to say therefore, verse 11, knowing the fear of the Lord there are very few places in the New Testament where the word the fear of the Lord comes. Here is one of those places.

That this thought that we have to stand before Jesus and he's going to examine our life and determine what we should receive according to what we did, whether good or bad this should bring a certain fear, reverence into our heart. If it doesn't bring a certain fear into your heart, the right type of fear I would say I don't know whether you're born again. It certainly brings a certain reverential fear in my heart.

Not that I'm afraid of God but it makes me take, to put it in other words it makes me take my life more seriously than I've taken it in the past. I want to please the Lord. I'm sure of my salvation.

I've never been in doubt of it for 55 years. But all these 55 years I did not always please the Lord. Particularly in the early years when I didn't have much light when I never heard this type of preaching.

Unfortunately I was in a church where they never spoke on this verse. I never heard anybody preach on this verse for years. I was a new Christian but as I studied the scripture I discovered it myself.

Therefore knowing the fear of the Lord we persuade men. We persuade men means people don't seem to be convinced and people should say hey that's right but no they don't respond like that and I've seen that through the years. You have to persuade them hey man take this seriously.

Take this seriously. We've got to persuade them. We've got to convince them.

This is important. That you've got to take your life seriously. You've got to take sin seriously.

Sin is not something to be played around with. We persuade men. And so to keeping that in mind you know Jesus is the great example we have of how he pleased God and we're walking in his footsteps.

So I want you to turn to Philippians in chapter 2 which is I believe the very first step we need to take if we want to be pleasing to God. The very first step. You've often heard me say it and I don't mind repeating it for the benefit of many who are new in our church.

There are many things that we have preached through the years I find that we need to repeat again and again because half the people here have never heard it. You need to hear it again. What is the very first step we take in following Jesus? Philippians chapter 2 because there it says in verse 5 have this attitude in yourself which was in Christ Jesus.

He's the one who pleased the Father and he tells us follow me and if I follow him I will definitely please the Father. There's no doubt about it. If I make him my example as he pleased the Father not only in those 30 years but in the three and a half years of ministry as well he pleased the Father.

He never went where the Father never told him to go. He didn't take a trip to Rome. He went where the Father told him to go even if it meant a lot of inconvenience.

There were times when he made long walks, sometimes walking a whole day to help somebody because the Father told him. So Jesus is our example in our life and in our ministry in his attitude to money. You see I'm so amazed at the number of Christians who don't even seem to see a simple thing like this.

A simple thing like this that Jesus never took a collection after he preached. It's amazing. How is it Christians haven't seen that? The Apostle Paul never went around taking a collection after he preached.

How is it Christians haven't seen that? Jesus never asked people to support him in his ministry. I'm doing a work for the Lord. Will you people support me? He never got a salary.

He never asked, he told his disciples I'll give you so much salary if you be my disciples. How is it all this salary system has come into Christendom? He never took a title. He was not Pastor Jesus or Reverend Jesus.

How is it all these things have come into Christendom? It's the work of Satan who has sown tares among the wheat, adopted human methods, we can't adopt human methods. I'll give you one example in the Old Testament. God had a law that the Ark must be carried by the Levites.

And David once decided hey let's do it in a better way. I heard about the Philistines sending the Ark back on a cart. That's much easier man.

Why should people carry it on their shoulder? And so David put it on an Ark copying the Philistines. And the ox and shoo and Uzzah touched the Ark and he died. Then David realized hey we didn't do it the right way.

These things are written in scripture but people say well we can change it. It doesn't really matter. There is one way to serve God.

There is one way to live to please him. That's the way Jesus lived. So if you take that seriously we'll have this.

I've often said that you can live your whole life. You can live the whole of 2015 with just one verse. Philippians 2.5 Have the same attitude in yourself that was in Christ Jesus.

I've taken that seriously for quite some time and I want to take it even more seriously in the next year. That all the 365 days of 2015 I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had towards my wife, towards my children, towards my grandchildren, towards my brothers and sisters. What would the attitude of Jesus be? I want to have that.

I want to speak like Jesus would speak to my wife and children and to my brothers and sisters. That's the way you should speak to your husbands and neighbors. I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had towards the Pharisees exposing their hypocrisy.

I'm not afraid of that. A lot of preachers don't want to offend the Pharisees because they just want to be nice and diplomatic. Well I'm not going to be nice and diplomatic to the Pharisees.

I'm sorry because Jesus was not like that. Those who want to seek honor and get a reputation for gentleness can go that way. But I'm not interested in a reputation for gentleness.

I want to be like Jesus. I want to please the Father. You know there's so many things like this.

I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had towards people who make money in the name of religion. Take a whip. I want to have the same attitude to people who crucify me.

Father forgive them. They don't know what they're doing. That's what I mean.

I want to have the same attitude that Jesus had. That's why we need to study the life of Jesus. So when we think of following Jesus you know for example as a little child how he obeyed his father and mother He didn't always obey them.

Once he was 30 years old and he left the home just like when a person gets married or he starts his own he's left his home and he's on his own. Then he told his mother, don't interfere with me mother. Woman what have I to do with you? Now I'm in my ministry.

So a time comes when we no longer have to obey our parents because we have to obey God. But we still have to honor our parents even if you're 100 years old you must honor your parents if they're still alive. Because when Jesus was hanging on the cross he thought of his mother.

You've got to care for your parents, your aged parents who perhaps need your help. You see the balance in Jesus. You see everything how we have to do it right if you look at Jesus' life.

When Jesus stepped out of his ministry he left his father and mother, earthly father and mother that's what you need to do when you get married. Leave your parents and cleave to your wife. Jesus is our example in all these things.

So in every area if you look at him, Lord what was your attitude to money and he was a carpenter and how you asked the Holy Spirit to show you how he earned his living and what was his attitude to his profession. Have this attitude in you which is in Christ Jesus in every situation you face in life. What is the attitude Jesus had? If you're watching something on television, have the attitude Jesus had.

Can I watch that? Can I have Jesus fellowshiping with me and watching this anything that I do? So the first step in this was his giving up his equality with God and coming down and becoming a man. Then only all these other things I mentioned started. So you can't really have the same attitude that Jesus had in all these areas unless you take that first step and that is the reason why many many people are unable to follow Jesus.

They have not taken that first step of coming down to zero. In the world when our children when they go to study in school we ask them to aim for a hundred. Have you got forty percent? Not good enough my son.

Aim for sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety. Aim for a hundred. In the Christian world in following Jesus it's the other way around.

We are up there and God says I want to bring you down to zero. It's the opposite. Everything in God's way is different from the ways of the world.

That means to make you small in your own eyes to recognize that you are nothing. That's the first step. So that's what Jesus did.

He was equal with God and he did not consider, verse 6, that equality was something to be held on to. Now all of us have something that makes us superior to others in some way. All of us sitting here.

We are superior to other people in this world in some area. Maybe you are better looking or you got a better salary or you got a bigger house or a better job. Maybe you excel in sports or you are anything.

Maybe you are more popular than others. There is some area which you know you are better than others. You have skills and sometimes you look at other people who don't have those abilities that you have and you sort of look down on them.

You don't despise them but you inwardly say, Thank God I am not like other men. That's the language of the Pharisee. Lord I thank you.

I am not ugly like that person. I am pretty good looking when I look in the mirror. I am not dumb like that guy.

I am a bit smart. I am not useless at singing like some of those people. I am pretty good at singing.

I thank God I can do this, that and the other. It is sort of an inward boasting. You will never be able to please God.

The first step is, He was equal with God. There is no higher position than that. Whatever you may have, is not higher than what Jesus had.

He did not grasp it. He did not think, I've got to hold on to that. When he came on earth, he didn't show himself.

Do you know who I am? None of that. If we get rid of this, we would have discovered one of the greatest secrets in the Christian life. Through the many years that I have preached this message in CFC churches, I have seen people who have heard and understood and heard and understood and heard it so well that they can even preach it to others, but it does not come true in their life.

It does not become manifest in their family life. Some very good brothers and sisters, when I see them and I speak to them, I can sense a spiritual pride in them, which they themselves don't sense. I can hear it when they testify.

They don't realize it, but it's so evident that in their mind they have not come down to zero. It's the first step, my brothers and sisters. And keep there.

Remain there. Have the same attitude in yourself. Though he was gone, he did not regard that equality with God as something to be held on to, but emptied himself.

From 100 he came to zero. Emptied himself. You know what it is to empty a vessel? Empty it completely.

He humbled himself and became a man. And that itself is such a mighty step. You may be very much higher than so many other human beings.

But the difference between you and other human beings may be one millimeter compared to the difference between God and man which is millions of miles. Where is one millimeter? Millions of miles? The difference between the smartest, cleverest, most good-looking person on earth and the ugliest, stupid person on earth is about one millimeter. But the difference between God and man is millions of miles.

And he came all the way down. That's why in that song we sing, Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the cross of Christ my God. All the vain things that charm me most I sacrifice them to his blood.

We have preached on humility here for years. And yet I have seen through the years that many have not understood it. Maybe they understood it in their head.

It's better to be humble than to know its definition. To be humble, even if you don't know the definition. To be humble is to be like Jesus.

He did not consider anything to be gross. He became a man. That itself is a mighty step down.

And then, that is the first step of humility. And then as a man, it says here, he became a servant. When he became a man, if he had been a king, that itself would have been a big downward step.

God, to an earthly king, it's a million miles down. But even if he went further down, that first step of humility was not enough. As a man, he went down to the lowest place of a servant.

Always his attitude was, I'm a servant of others. I did not come here to earth, he once said, for people to serve me. I came here to serve others.

So, you know, this is another area where you really have to learn from Jesus. Remember, this is why the father said, I'm well pleased with him. So if your ambition is to please God, don't have your own ideas

about how to please God.

Don't spat yourself on the back that I've done this and I've done that and I've done the other thing. It's not what you do that's going to please God. What about a paralyzed person lying in bed who really loves Jesus, who can do nothing? Can that person please God? It's a crazy idea that the Christian world has put into our head.

That only if you do this, that and the other, you will please God. And some of you, if you look at your lives, you may think, well I'm doing this and I'm doing that and I'm going to church and I'm doing this for the Lord and I'm witnessing here and I'm witnessing there and I'm pleasing the Lord. The Lord may not be pleased with you at all.

Because it's not what you do. It's your attitude. Have the same attitude that Jesus had.

It's your attitude towards your husband. It's your attitude towards your wife. It's your attitude towards your brothers and sisters in the church.

It's your attitude towards other human beings. It's your attitude towards beggars. It's your attitude towards your maidservant at home.

It's your attitude towards that auto rickshaw driver who's fighting with you. Or the porter in the railway station. It's your attitude, attitude, attitude that determines whether you're pleasing God or not.

Not the things you do and say. Deeper than all that. After becoming a man, he became a servant, a bond servant.

In other words, he went to the lowest place that a human being could be. Bond servant means a slave. Now we don't understand that here in India so much.

There are a few slaves. They're known as bonded labor in some parts of the villages where people are so much in debt they didn't have any money to give back to the landlord who kept on giving them very little money. They finally had to sell themselves.

Unfortunately, there was that type of slavery in India. But in Jesus' day, there were slaves. They were called bond servants, slaves.

They were the lowest. They were lower than servants. They had no rights.

They were not paid anything. You could starve them if you wanted. You could kill them if you wanted.

The government will not question. It's like if you break your furniture at home. Is the government going to question why did you break that chair? Slaves were like that with no rights.

And Jesus took that place. How would you like to take a place of having no rights? That means you don't have a right that people should treat you with respect. I tell you, I've seen a lot of people in this country.

In India particularly. We respect age. That's a good thing.

I believe we must respect older people. But the sad thing is, we have a lot of older people who expect that respect. That's wrong.

To respect older people is absolutely right. But to go around expecting that... I think I'm perhaps the oldest person in this room. Maybe one or two older than me.

I don't know. I don't expect any respect from any of you. I want to be like Jesus.

I don't care how people address me. You know how in this country we always must address people with respect if they are older. Okay, good.

We must do it. I do it. I will always respect people.

I respect even younger people. But I don't expect any respect from anyone. Zero.

That's why I'm a happy man. You can't offend me. It's impossible to offend me.

I challenge people to offend me. What they do, what they don't do, what they say, what they don't say. If I ask somebody to do something, even in the CFC office, and I say, well, they don't do it.

Forget it. It's okay. Or they bungle up something and spoil something.

It's okay, brother. There's only one thing serious in the world. That's sin.

Avoid that. All the other things are trivial. So, you ask yourself, have you really taken the place of a bondservant? That's how Jesus pleased the Father.

Not enough to be a man, but right down to be a bondservant. Never seeking to put himself above anybody. I often thought in the marriage at Cana, he was invited.

He was one of the invitees to the marriage. And when I read that Mary came to Jesus and told there's no wine. He said, what have I got to do with you? My time has not yet come.

And then Mary turned to the servants and said, whatever he tells you to do, do it. I see a picture there of Jesus. He was hanging around with the servants.

He wasn't with all the big shots in the wedding. He was talking to some of the servants at the wedding. I said, wow.

I want to have that spirit. Then he could tell the servants, pour some water into this. Right from the beginning.

He was always looked around for those who were trying to encourage the people who were lowest in society. Like a blind Bartimaeus. Or the lepers.

The lepers were the lowest in those days. They couldn't even come near. They had to stand at a distance and say, I'm a leper.

I'm a leper. Don't come near me. And Jesus would go near them.

His whole attitude. He was a bond servant. He came underneath everybody in order to lift them up.

I'll tell you a little secret. If you want to help others, you've got to get underneath them spiritually. In other words, you've got to know that you are nothing compared to them.

That's why it says in the same passage, Philippians 2 and verse 3, Don't do anything from selfishness or empty conceit. Pride is an empty thing. The more pride that you have in yourself, the more empty you are.

The more humility you have, the more full you are. Empty pride. That's a lovely phrase.

Empty pride. Pride is an empty vessel. Do nothing from that.

But with humility of mind, it's in our mind, in our attitude to others, we have humility. Regard others, everyone, as more important than yourself. That's what Jesus did when he took the place of a servant.

He went right down to the bottom and considered everybody as more important than me. And that's why people could disturb him. We read in one place that he was going towards in one direction and somebody said, Hey, can you come here and look at my daughter? He said, OK, I'll come there.

And we read that once, I don't know what time of the night, Nicodemus comes and knocks at his door. Was it midnight? Was it one o'clock in the morning? He knocks and says, I just want to have a chat with you. He says, fine.

He's not that great preacher who says, hey, why don't you come at a more decent time? He was a servant. I've been tested in this. When I get phone calls at two o'clock in the morning from other countries who don't know the time difference between their country and India.

They're wide awake there, we're fast asleep here. But I say, perhaps that guy is needy. Or someone comes to your home to disturb you when you're doing something important.

I say, Lord, I'm not saying that we have to be slaves to that, but we must be sensitive. Consider others as more important than yourself. How can you consider others as more important than yourself if you take a title? That's what I've got against us.

There's a lot of Christian preachers. They want to be reverend, they want to be doctor. I remember an American college sent me a letter a few years ago saying, the time has come for you to be honored for serving the Lord.

We want to give you an honorary doctorate from our college for the books you've written, etc. Isn't it good to be known as Dr. Zak Poonen? He said, rubbish. Trash.

I said, no, I don't want it. I want to be known to the end of my life as Brother Zak, that's all. I don't want to be known as doctor, somebody, or anything.

Jesus was a servant. He would have refused it. And I say, Lord, if you refuse it, who am I to take such things? I don't want it.

I don't judge other people who do it. I say, let them do it. They may be having some reason to do it.

But I want to follow Jesus. I want to be as far as possible. I think I regret the years when I didn't have light on all this, when I didn't please Him.

At least I can make up in the years that are left to me to really seek to be like Jesus in humbling Himself, to be a servant of everyone, to be underneath everyone, never to give people the impression that I'm bigger than you, I'm more important than you. Not at all. Jesus was more spiritual than others.

He knew that. And there's nothing wrong in recognizing that you are more spiritual than others. Paul knew that he was more spiritual than the Corinthians.

That's a false humility, which goes around saying, oh, Brother, you are more spiritual than me. That's nonsense. That's a false humility.

I don't want to have any of that. I mean, if I recognize the work God has done in me, he has done a work in me. No doubt.

I can see other people who are carnal, and they are carnal. But they are more important, even if they are carnal. Do you know the passage where Paul talks about the Corinthians as carnal? But I want you to see something there especially.

It's interesting how the Lord has put these two things together. We are not to consider others as more spiritual than ourselves. It's not true.

Jesus didn't consider others. Jesus did not consider anybody in the world as more spiritual than himself. He was the most spiritual man that walked on the earth, and he knew it.

He said, I am humble. Learn from me, for I am humble. He could say that.

But he was a servant of everybody else. He considered others as more important, not as more spiritual. 1 Corinthians 3. Look at how Paul says.

What does he think of himself? What does he think of the Corinthians? He says, brethren, I cannot speak to you as spiritual people because you are babes. You are babies. I am not a baby, Paul says.

You are fleshly. There is jealousy and strife. I don't have all that, verse 3. You are walking like other human beings.

I don't walk like other human beings. I try to walk like Jesus. So now you have a comparison of Paul comparing himself with the Corinthians.

He says, I am more spiritual than you guys. But what does he think of himself in terms of importance? In the same passage. Just read.

What is Apollos, verse 5? What is Paul? Servants. I planted, verse 6. Apollos watered. God is the one who caused the growth.

Now listen to this. This is the verse I want you to see. The one who plants is zero.

And the one who waters is zero. Did you see that? This is just a paraphrase. He who plants is nothing and he who waters is nothing.

He has put it the other way. Neither is the one who plants anything. Neither is the one who waters anything.

In other words, the one who plants is nothing. The one who waters is nothing. God who causes the growth.

So when it comes to his position in relation to the Corinthians, he says, I am zero. That's why God used him. That's why God used Paul so mightily.

He recognized, I am a zero. And Apollos is a zero. God is everything.

Do you recognize that about yourself, my brother, sister? Do you recognize that honestly about yourself? The Apostle Paul was way ahead of us all spiritually. What did he think of himself? I am just a zero. And he wasn't just trying to act humble.

He really believed deep down in his heart that I am a zero. In other words, anything that is within me is what God has done. Take away what God has done, I am zero again.

It is very, very important to understand this. This is one of the great secrets of the Christian life. And if you have understood it, you have understood one of the greatest things that need to be understood.

See the danger there is. Galatians chapter 6 of our getting exalted ideas. Galatians 6 verse 3. He uses that word nothing or zero again here.

Galatians 6.3. If anyone thinks he is something when he is actually zero, he is deceiving himself. Paul says I am a zero. Apollos is a zero.

What about you guys? Maybe you don't think you are a hundred. Maybe you say I am at least thirty. Paul says you are thirty, I am zero, you are ahead of me.

You are more important than me. And that is why these Galatians had so many problems. And that is why the Corinthians had so many problems.

That is why they never grew spiritually. And my brother, sister, that is why you have so many problems. And that is why you didn't grow as much as you could have in 2014.

And that is why you have so many difficulties in your family life. That is why you have constant strife. Because you are not zeros.

Two zeros cannot fight with each other. It is impossible. It is when one person thinks I am a somebody, I am not a zero like you.

Then you have problems. Anybody, it doesn't matter who they are, Christian workers, brothers, sisters, husband, wife, anyone. This tendency to lift ourselves up, if you see the origin of it in the scriptures, it is from the devil.

You have heard me say this many times. The head of the angels perfectly created in his thought he came the desire to be bigger than the other angels. That lifted him up in a moment he became the devil.

And every other demon, every other angel rather, who had that same thought fell with Satan and the other demons today. An angel became a demon in a split second because he exalted himself. And the only way to, he infected Adam and the entire race of Adam with that poison that makes you look down on others.

Don't we have sisters who go to some new sister who comes to the church or maybe a visitor to the church and say why are you wearing ornaments? Why do you wear jewelry? Don't you see me? No jewelry in my ears? That is what they are actually saying. They don't say it like that. Why are you wearing

jewelry? I am superior to you by the way.

I am just trying to let you know that. They are the biggest pain in the neck. In CFC.

I wish they would go and join some other church and not bring disgrace upon the name of the Lord in this church. I am not telling you all to wear jewelry. My wife and I don't wear it.

But I don't despise others. No. You can have a star outside your house on Christmas day or a Christmas tree inside.

I am not going to despise you. I don't have it. But I am not going to despise a person who thinks slightly different from me in some of these areas.

Not at all. You see that is the problem. You may be doing what is right.

It is right. I have a conviction that I shouldn't wear jewelry. But when I despise another person who wears it I put a dead lizard inside this wonderful chicken curry and spoil the whole thing.

That is what I am saying. Don't spoil the whole wonderful life of yours by pride. Looking down on somebody because they don't hold the same conviction as you have on some truth.

I meet people who are pastors. They want to be called pastors. I say sure.

You want me to call you pastor? Sure. If that is what you want. If somebody wants to be called a doctor so and so or whatever it is.

I have no problem. I don't want it. If you want it, go ahead.

You get offended if you are not given that title. I have no problem. Because I consider that person as more important than myself.

You may be a hundred times more spiritual than him. Consider others as more important. See an Old Testament man who understood this.

He was not even a believer. In the book of Daniel you read about this great king Nebuchadnezzar. He was the ruler of the superpower.

There was only one superpower in the world those days. And that was Babylon. It is like when Egypt was once a superpower.

Now Babylon was a superpower. In Egypt it was a pharaoh. In Babylon it was Nebuchadnezzar.

The founder, great ruler of the Babylonian Empire. And he built that huge Babylon which is the hanging gardens of Babylon or one of the wonders of the world. In Daniel chapter 4 he was proud.

He said this is how he started. Daniel 4.30. Isn't this Babylon the great which I built and as a royal residence by the might of my power and the glory of my majesty. And God humbled him till he became like an animal.

And he started eating grass. We read in chapter 33. And then finally he humbled himself after I don't know seven years or so.

And then it says in verse 34 his reason returned to him. And then he said I acknowledge God. And here's the statement in verse 35.

All the inhabitants of the earth are zero. That's the revelation Paul got. He gets that revelation.

Everybody on earth including me is a zero. The ruler of the greatest superpower on earth. And it says here verse 34 my reason returned to me.

I'll tell you when your reason has returned to you. When you recognize that you're a zero. Till then there's a sense heaven considers you a bit off your head.

You may not think so. But you're a bit off your head. Because you think you're a somebody.

Your reason will return to you my brother my sister when you recognize you're a zero. All the inhabitants of the earth are zero. Only God is everything.

So that's how Jesus was. He was He came as a man. Humbled himself.

Came down and became a servant. That was the other step. And then finally it says in Philippians 2 he became like a criminal.

Philippians 2 His first step of humility was God to man. Second step of humility was man to bond servant. And third he humbled himself Philippians 2.8 to death on a cross which is the death of a criminal.

God to man to bond servant to criminal. Criminals are worse than even beggars. And Jesus went right down.

You cannot go lower than that. So that's why I say he humbled himself became a man. He humbled himself.

Became a bond servant. He humbled himself to the level of a criminal so that he could be underneath everybody. That's why you often heard me say the three secrets of the Christian life are humility humility And it's all there in Philippians 2.5 to 8 If you have seen it you've seen the secret of the Christian life.

Now I want to give you a little illustration which I once did for the children I want nine brothers here to come forward the ones I asked to please come quickly Can you come and stand here? You just stand down, down, down I'll call you one by one Any side, any, you can stand here also Are you all here? Ok, come. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 7, 8, 9, ok Now I'm going to demonstrate something here What are the things we glory in? Can you come here and stand facing the yeah Most of us glory in wealth Where's that mic?

Ok Wealth, the wealthiest man in the world Have you seen him? He's number one in Forbes list of the wealthiest people Zero in God's eyes Ok What are the other things we glory in? We've got another brother Here's a good looking brother, come here Beauty You see how handsome he is? I mean it Zero Ok What's the other thing people glory in? Ok, come brother He's got a very high position in the world You don't recognize it, he looks humble but he's got a very high position Zero in God's eyes Ok, the next one He looks very clever PhD, education Zero Ok, one more Here's the athlete He wins every medal in the Olympics Sports Zero This guy is one who's really popular Young people, old people, girls, everyone He's really popular Popularity, zero Ok This is me Preacher, zero He'll represent me Preachers, you know, people can be proud of preaching Zero And there are a hundred and one other things Or a million other things that represents all the other things You can be proud of Ok And the last, the root cause of it all Is

self Now study it carefully See what they are They are what Nebuchadnezzar understood All the inhabitants of the earth Are nothing You know what gives value to them?

Jesus Now you see the value of all these people You take it away, all the zeros You can have all those qualities And you're still a zero But the moment Jesus comes in Even if it's just one person He's got value more than all these other people Just because Jesus is with him You children, remember that Never forget it One person And when you get fellowship One person, ten becomes a hundred That's the wonder of fellowship You get one more brother In fellowship, see what happens And one more And one more Fellowship, fellowship, fellowship Where everybody recognizes their zeros This is the church This is the body of Christ And you can be a member of the body of Christ A functioning member If you recognize like King Nebuchadnezzar and like Paul That you're a zero And that God is everything I hope this will be imprinted in your mind Forever And the moment you suddenly begin to think highly of yourself again You know what happens You're a zero all over again That's why you always need to keep Jesus Number one in your life In every area of your life Throughout the new year Thank you brother, all you zeros, thank you very much And the one who preaches Is also equally a zero Just like everybody else This is the secret, my brothers and sisters This is why Jesus pleased the father He took his position Before the father Humility is not saying I'm nothing or hanging your head down Or wearing torn clothes or none of all that Humility is the recognition God is everything You and I may have different qualities But we are zero in his eyes So God is in the business of bringing us down from 100 to 0 I don't know where you've got so far But I hope the path of the righteous It's like the shining light that shines brighter and brighter and brighter Which means the darkness goes away What does it mean the darkness going away?

The darkness is our pride, our exaltation It goes away and the path of the righteous becomes brighter and brighter Brighter means we become 0 and 0 and 0 like John the Baptist said He will increase when I decrease So I pray that all of you Will have a blessed year in 2015 Where you decrease And come down to 0 quickly Let's bow before God in prayer Please think about what You heard And say Lord that's the way I want to go In this new year Now I want to get to that 0 place where Jesus was And your fellowship with Jesus Will be better and brighter and more glorious Because he's down there at that 0 level Many of us are far away from him Because we have high thoughts If you want to get close to him Get down to 0 Heavenly Father Help us to be gripped by the truth of God's word To live according to it We humbly ask in Jesus' name Amen

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/lkY83JZGOjA.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/jesus-pleased-the-father-by-his-humility/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net