

(The Works of Faith) Jesus Our Example

by Zac Poonen

The New Agreement, based on Jesus as our example, is a partnership with Jesus Christ where we learn from his example and live a light and exciting Christian life.

Duration: 1:00:25

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 14:6, Romans 10:17, James 1:22, 1 Peter 2:9

Topics: "Following Jesus", "Temptation And Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker highlights the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, God gave rules for people to follow, but it was difficult for them to live by these rules. In contrast, the New Testament provides an example for people to follow, which is more effective than rules. The speaker emphasizes that Jesus was an example for preachers and full-time workers, and his example can help us when we are tempted. The sermon also emphasizes that our biggest problem is not a shortage of money, but rather falling into temptation and sin.

Transcript

I want to read a verse in Hebrews and chapter 8. We know that our Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. And testament is an old word for agreement. You know, we can sign an agreement with somebody when we plan to do any transaction, like selling a house or doing some business.

And God made an agreement with man through Moses 1,500 years before Christ came to earth. That's called the Old Testament or old agreement or old covenant. It all means the same thing.

And then Jesus came. And from the day of Pentecost onwards, God made a new agreement with man. And that's called the New Testament or New Covenant or New Agreement.

And there is a lot of difference between the two. A lot of Christians don't understand this. And that's why they have a lot of problems.

And the first agreement was faulty. It says that in Hebrews 8 verse 7. For if that first covenant or agreement had been faultless, there would have been no need for a second. Why did God make a second agreement, if the first one was perfect? Now we need to recognize this is not like, you know, a company putting out a new model of a car, because the first one was faulty.

They discovered some fault in it and rectified it and made a second better model. God doesn't make any mistakes. He knows the end from the beginning.

So when he made an agreement with man the first time, it wasn't because he thought it would work. He knew it wouldn't work. We can say, why in the world did he make an agreement with man? Why did he make that type of covenant which is called the law? It was not for his sake.

It was for man's sake. Man had first to learn a lesson. And that was basically this, that no matter how hard you try, you'll never measure up to God's standard.

That was the lesson that God wanted to teach man through the law through fifteen hundred years. No matter how hard you try, you will not reach my standard, God says. So we can say the law was given to reveal sin, reveal to man his sin, his inability to come up to God's standard.

And no matter how holy he thought he was, he'd still come short of God's standard. And this is what the Pharisees in Jesus' time never realized. They thought they had come up to God's standard.

And that's why they thought they were righteous. Whereas the thieves and the prostitutes and the people who were cheats and sinners, they knew they hadn't come to God's standard. And that's why Jesus said to the Pharisees, I didn't come to call the righteous, I came to call sinners.

And who was righteous? Nobody was righteous. The Bible says there's none righteous, no not one. That's written in the Psalms.

But the Pharisees thought they were righteous. And they thought they were righteous because they were a little better than the others. But they hadn't recognized that even though they were better than others, they were way below God's standard.

Now, it's not just the Pharisees. There are a lot of Christians like that today, who think that they have pleased God by their own efforts, and who think they're more acceptable to God because they're holier than somebody else. So that problem exists even today.

Man, in the Old Testament, God gave man commandments. You shouldn't do this, you should do that. The Ten Commandments are basically like that.

A whole lot of things that they're not supposed to do, and a whole lot of things they were supposed to do. And then beyond the Ten Commandments, in those books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, there were a whole lot of other laws that God gave man. You got to do this, you got to do this.

And if you live according to this standard, you'll get life, because nobody could live up to that standard. And then Jesus came, and man was in a hopeless condition because those who were sincere, you know, there were a whole lot of people who were insincere, who pretended that they were living up to God's standards. A lot of Christians like that today.

They give an outward impression of being very holy, and never admit to the struggles and battles they have in their thoughts and attitudes. And because on the outside they look very holy in their conduct and dress and many other things, they fool a lot of people. They don't fool God, they don't fool the devil, but they do fool a lot of people.

And they make other people feel small. We must remember this, that whenever you make other people feel small, you're not spiritual, you're a Pharisee. Jesus, the wonderful thing about Jesus was, even though he was a million times holier than those Pharisees, nobody ever felt small in his presence.

Nobody ever felt like a sinner. They were sinners, but they felt comfortable in the presence of Jesus because he was so full of mercy. And that's what made the difference between Jesus and the Pharisees.

And that's what makes the difference today between a spiritual Christian and a Christian who is just holy on the outside. So the other big difference is this. In the Old Testament, or the Old Agreement, God only gave certain rules.

You've got to live by these rules. And it's always difficult to follow rules, no matter how good they are. Impossible.

It's like teaching a person how to swim on a blackboard, explaining how to move your legs and how to breathe and how to move your hands, and then tell them, OK, go jump in the river, follow these rules. They'll all drown because the rules are correct. But it doesn't help people to learn.

But in the New Testament, God gave us an example. An example is always better than rules. And an example is like when a person says, come along with me to the river, just do what I do.

Jumps into the river and swims up and down and says, do what I do. That is the main difference between the Old Agreement and the New Agreement. That we now have somebody whom we can follow, not just a bunch of rules and regulations.

So when we read the Bible, you can read it in two ways. I want you to see that in 2 Corinthians 3. In 2 Corinthians 3, it speaks of a veil that lies over man's eyes when he tries to read the Bible. That means he can't understand what the Bible says.

I find that a lot of people today, when they read the Bible, it's almost as though there's a cloth on top of their Bible. You try reading the Bible with a cloth on top of it, you won't be able to get much out of it. And it's something like that.

There's an invisible veil over their eyes when they read. They can't understand. And a lot of people go to Bible school, theological seminaries, they try to read the Bible like that.

They make it so complicated. And a lot of Christians have got the idea that the Bible is such a difficult book to understand, it's so complicated. It isn't.

It's actually very simple. It's written for children, it's written for babes. And if you've got some complicated explanation of some verse, you can be pretty sure it's wrong.

Because the real explanation is always simple. So here it says in 2 Corinthians 3, verse 14, Their minds were hardened, for until this very day, when they read the Old Covenant, there's a veil which is not lifted, but it is removed in Christ. So the only way to remove that veil is if you can see Jesus in the Bible.

Now you can read the Bible and not see Jesus. Or you can read the Bible and see Jesus. And you can read the Bible and see a bunch of rules and regulations, just like people saw in the Old Testament.

And I've seen lots of Christians today like that, you know. Good Christians, born again Christians, whose life is filled with rules and regulations that they've got for themselves and for other people. And they make life miserable for everybody with all their rules and regulations.

It's because they've got this veil. But it says here, when a man turns to the Lord, verse 16, that veil is taken away. He turns to the Lord, and that Lord, he's not talking about Jesus now.

No. He says in verse 17, that Lord I'm talking about now is the Holy Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

And he says now, when we take away this veil, this cloth, verse 18, and look into God's word, the mirror is the word of God, we see not laws and rules and regulations, but we see the glory of Jesus. And then we are changed into that same likeness from one degree of glory to another by the Holy Spirit. So here's a very simple thing that's helped me through the years, that when I read the Bible, I don't want to find rules.

I want to see Jesus in the Bible. Because that's, God has given me his word to help me to understand what Jesus is like, and to make me like him. That's what it says in verse 18, to change me into that same likeness from one degree of glory to another.

So, how do you know whether you're getting to know your Bible or not, according to this verse? You should be becoming more Christ-like in your life. That's the only way to know whether you know the Bible or not. The person who knows the Bible the most is the one who is most Christ-like, not the one who can explain verses better than anybody else.

See, that's the old way, you know, in the Old Testament, if you were in a situation and you didn't know what to do, you'd go to the priest and say, well, can you give me an answer to this particular thing? And the priest would turn to some verse and say, yeah, I've studied that. I'll tell you, here's the answer. That's what the Bible says you must do in such situations.

He had a lot of rules and regulations, and they spent years studying to be priests, and they knew exactly which verse to turn to when people came to them with problems and questions. There are a lot of preachers like that today. Whereas what God intended in the New Covenant is that when we have a problem, we turn to Jesus.

I was once in one part of India where there were some very fine believers. It was in a remote tribal area. Well, not simpler people.

And the only thing about them was, although many of them were believers, those believers used to smoke cigarettes. Now, I didn't blame them for that because I see nobody's taught them. Supposing you go into some poor neighborhood and you find children there who can't read and write, you don't blame them for that.

Their parents never taught them. How can you blame them for not knowing how to read or write? I'll just tell you this little thing that when you see something wrong in someone, if your first tendency is to blame them for that, you'll never be able to help them. Remember that.

You've got to blame their leaders. You've got to blame the parents if they never taught their children to read and write. And you've got to blame the leaders.

I felt like that, that these people didn't know. So I decided to teach them. But I wanted to teach this to them in a way that they wouldn't get offended.

In a way that they would learn a lesson that would help them in many other areas in life. So I said, it was being translated. They didn't know English.

It was in a language, another language which I didn't know. I had a translator standing next to me translating everything I said. And I told them, OK, now I want to teach you folks how a Christian should smoke cigarettes.

It must be different from the way other Christians, from non-Christians smoke cigarettes. A Christian must do everything along with Jesus Christ. He should never do it alone.

So I said, the next time you feel like smoking a cigarette, you try and offer Jesus one and say, well, Lord, this is good, you know, smoke a cigarette. And if you think that Jesus would accept it and he'd smoke one along with you, go ahead and smoke it. But if you feel, no, he'd say, no, thank you.

I don't want that. Then you shouldn't be smoking it either. I said, the same thing applies to watching television programs.

Well, if you're watching what you think is a very interesting program, why don't you invite Jesus to sit and watch it with you? And say, Lord, this is a really good program. You've got to see it. And if you think he'd say, no, I'm not interested in that one, you shouldn't be watching it either.

And the same principle applies to everything in life. That if you can't do it along with Jesus, don't do it. If you can do it along with him, do it.

So how many rules and regulations have I given you? Nothing. I just pointed you to Jesus. That's the new covenant.

Whereas in the old covenant, there's a whole lot of rules and regulations and you always had to keep adding to them because there were new things cropping up all the time, which are not in that list. But now we don't need that. Because all you've got to ask yourself is, can I do this along with the Lord Jesus? And the Holy Spirit will immediately tell you whether you can do it or not.

You know, I read a story years ago of, it was a parable, which said, supposing Jesus came to your house one day, knocked at your door and you heard the knock and opened the door. And that was Jesus himself, standing at the door. And he said, I'd like to come and spend a couple of days with you.

I'm sure you'd say, sure, Lord, come in. I'm so delighted that you come spend a few days in my house and you've given the best room and the best food. But in this article, it said, do you think some things would have to change in your home during the time he's there? Would you have to speak a little more kindly to your wife while Jesus is at the table? You may want to hide certain books, perhaps, which he may see lying around or not see some of your favorite TV programs or a lot of things.

Would you allow him to come and look at your bank statements and your finances and everything? Or would you say, no, we don't want you to look into all that. Just stay in your guest room and mind your own business. We'd love to have you here, but we don't want you snooping around, looking at every little thing in my house.

You know, and it goes on to show how we really don't want Jesus interfering in certain parts of our life. That's sad. And we say we're Christians.

We say we love to have him. And after two or three days, if Jesus says, OK, I'm going. Of course, you'd say, no, Lord, stay on.

But when he goes, would you have a sigh of relief and say, well, now I can get on with the way I normally live. That's how a lot of Christians would feel, because it's uncomfortable having Jesus examining every little thing. So it's only to point out that a lot of people, a lot of us may be just fooling ourselves that the Lord is with us.

He's not really there. We don't want him there. But this is new covenant life where wherever I go, whatever I do, Jesus is there with me.

All the time when I'm speaking to my wife, Jesus is standing right there. I'm speaking in his presence. I speak to my children when I discipline my children, when I handle my finances, my accounts, the way I spend my money, the way I spend my time, the things I read, the things I look at and everything.

I want to do it along with Jesus. That is new covenant life. I don't need any rules or regulations.

This is the only thing I need. The new covenant is a partnership with Jesus Christ. It's like a marriage where I never do anything without him.

So this is why in the New Testament God has given us an example and not just commandments. That's why it's so much easier and so much better. In Matthew chapter 11, Jesus said these words, verse 28 to 30.

Particularly verse 29 where it says, Jesus said, come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden and I'll give you rest. Verse 28. You know, one mark of living under the old agreement in the Old Testament is it really makes us weary.

We get tired and if you find that the Christian life is a burdensome, heavy thing, you can be pretty sure you're under the old covenant. There's something, the Christian life is never meant to be burdensome and heavy. It is meant to be exciting and something that makes us cheerful and not gloomy.

If the Christian life you're experiencing is heavy and burdensome and you sort of grit your teeth and somehow go through with it and always pretend before other people that you're enjoying it when you're not really enjoying it. That's not true Christianity. There's something missing.

So that's what Jesus meant when he said, those of you who are weary and heavy laden, come to me, I'll give you rest. He says in verse 30, my yoke is easy, my burden is light. In the New Testament, the Christian life is not a burden, it's light, it's exciting.

And I can honestly say that, that's what it's been for me for many years now. But that comes through what we read in verse 29, this is the secret. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I'm gentle and humble in heart, you shall find rest for your souls.

In India, in the villages, most people still plough their farms with bullocks. The vast majority of India is like that. And between two bullocks, there's a thing called a yoke, a wooden yoke, to make sure they plough together.

That's what Jesus is referring to, take my yoke upon you. So when they want to train a junior inexperienced bullock, how to plough a straight furrow, they'll put a yoke on its neck along with a senior bullock that's experienced. And then that senior bullock will train that younger one how to plough a straight furrow.

And that younger one has to go that way because it's got a yoke on it. So that's what Jesus is saying here, take my yoke upon you. Let's learn how to live a straight life, how to plough straight without being crooked.

And learn from me, he says in verse 29, that's the picture. So the Christian life is basically a lifelong experience of learning from Jesus. And that's why it's so exciting.

Imagine if you were in a schoolroom every day and Jesus was the teacher. You'd never have one boring lesson. Jesus is never boring.

I don't believe anything Jesus, I don't believe a single sermon of Jesus was boring. He was always so interesting to listen to. And in one place it says that he talked to people for about one hour.

They were walking down to a mess and at the end of it they said their hearts burned within them when they heard Luke 24, Jesus speaking to them. So Jesus says learn from me, learn from my example. So the example of Jesus is our example.

And that's why God did not send his son into the world as a full grown man. You know God could have sent his son into the world like a full grown man. Like when he made Adam, he didn't make Adam like a baby.

Adam, when God made Adam, he was a full grown man, straight away. But when God sent Jesus to earth, why do you think he sent him as a baby? Because, you little children need to listen to this. Because if he had come as a full grown man, he wouldn't be an example to all of you children.

But he had to be an example for people of all ages. And that's why he had to come to earth as a baby. And grow up so that he can be an example to the 5 year old, and the 7 year old, and the 10 year old, and the 15 year old, and the teenager, and the 20 year old, and the 25 year old, and to the grown up adult, to the 30 year old.

Why did he have to work? I think he worked for at least 12 years as a carpenter from the age of 18 to 30. And carpenters in those days didn't build homes like here. Carpenters do what they do in India.

In India nobody builds homes of wood. The homes in Palestine were not built of wood either. Carpenters worked in their carpenter shop making furniture.

That's what they did. And Jesus did that. And it's probable that Joseph, Mary's husband, had died by then.

Which means, we read in Mark chapter 6 that Jesus had 4 younger brothers and 2 younger sisters at least. Perhaps more than 2, I don't know. But he had at least 6 brothers and sisters younger to him, plus his mother and himself.

That were 8 people living in that home. It was a large family. 8 people living in that home.

And Jesus had to support them. And it wasn't a rich home. It was a very poor home.

Carpenters were not rich people. And why did God allow his son to work as a carpenter to support a family of 8 people? Because he had to be an example to people who have to work today. And support large families.

And I'm sure there were many lessons there to learn from how to live on a large family with a limited income. Why was he a full-time worker for 3 and a half years as a preacher? Because he had to be an example for preachers and full-time workers. In every area, for every single one of us, he had to be an example.

He is an example for husbands. Because the Bible says, love your wife like Christ loved the church. And how Jesus washed the disciples feet and served them and thought of their interests always.

And his husband should be like that. Towards his wife. And the Bible also says, for wives.

That wives should have the same relationship to their husbands as Jesus had to his father in heaven. It's written in 1 Corinthians 11 that just like God is the head of Christ, 1 Corinthians 11 3. In the same way, man is the head of a woman. So, like Jesus joyfully submitted to his father in heaven, a wife can joyfully submit to her husband.

In every single case, the example the New Testament points us to is Jesus. Why should children obey their parents? It's not just in the Old Testament, it was a commandment. Honor your father and mother.

So that it will go well with you and you live long on the earth. But in the New Testament, it's more than that. It is a commandment, but you also got an example.

It says about Jesus that when he was subject, Luke chapter 2 and verse 51. It says, he went to Nazareth and he was subject to Joseph and Mary. What an example.

Sometimes, you know, nowadays we have children as they grow up, they go to school. And sometimes we find that in India and many we have parents who are not educated in our villages. And the children are more educated than their parents.

And sometimes when children get more educated than their parents and they know more than their parents. They think they don't have to obey their parents. They think, well, my parents are not so clever, they don't know certain things.

I'm cleverer than them. And Jesus is an example for such children because, I believe that's what we got to teach our children. Because he was perfect.

And Joseph and Mary, his earthly parents were not perfect. You know how difficult it is to submit to someone who is not perfect? And when you are better than them. Have you ever tried submitting to someone who knows less than you? Or who is not as good as you are? Not as perfect as you are? Maybe you are converted and your husband is not converted.

Now you know how difficult it is to submit. And the Bible says you got to submit. Jesus was like that.

He was perfect. And he submitted for so many years to Joseph and Mary who were not perfect. That is an example.

It wasn't always easy. We can imagine situations in Jesus' home. Where, can you imagine Jesus playing his little 12-year-old boy with other boys outside his home.

And then his mother says, come, I want you to go to the village well and bring me a pail of water. What would he say? What would 12-year-old children say today when they are busy playing some game and mummy calls them to do some work? I know what Jesus would have done. He would have dropped immediately and gone and done what his mother told him to do.

And when he went to the village well, he would not have brought half a bucket of water. He would have brought a full bucket. There are lots of things if you think about it and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how Jesus lived.

You have an example for every single stage of your life. As a child, as a teenager, as an office worker, as a person trying to earn his own living. I can imagine that Jesus would have made a lot of things in his home, in his carpenter shop.

If some widow asked him to make a chair or something, he would have made it and given it to her. If she asked him, how much does that cost, he would have said, well, just take it. You are a widow, you don't have much.

If you work like that, you are not going to be the richest carpenter in Nazareth. But you will be a good man. And that's the thing Jesus had in his testimony.

He was a good man. He went around doing good, it says in Acts 10.38. He spent his life doing good. He didn't make a lot of money.

If you go around doing good, you are not going to make a lot of money, I'll tell you that. But he went about doing good. A lot of people don't want to live like Jesus, I'll tell you honestly.

They don't want to live like Jesus. They don't want Jesus to be their example. They'd rather follow just a few rules and regulations and live for themselves.

But Jesus never lived for himself. In everything, I remember when I started preaching years ago. I said, well, Jesus is my example.

I don't want to preach like other preachers preach. I want to see how Jesus preached. Follow exactly the way he did it.

And I saw that Jesus was always very interesting. He used a lot of pictures and stories. That's how he preached.

And he preached in a way that even little children could understand. He was never complicated. Most of the preachers I heard were so complicated that I couldn't understand a lot of things they were saying.

Those of you who ever preached the word, I'll give you a little bit of advice. Go and ask the children in the church whether they understood you. If they didn't understand you, you shouldn't be preaching like that.

In everything, here was an example God has given us to follow. And it says about Jesus in Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 15. Hebrews 4.15 That we don't have a high priest.

It's talking about Jesus. That Jesus is not a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weakness. In other words, he is one who can sympathize, understand our struggles.

You know, as we live in this world, we have a lot of struggles. And he can understand our struggles, particularly our struggle with temptation. And he says here that in order to help us to understand our struggles, God allowed him to be tempted in all things as we are.

And yet without sin. This is an amazing example. God, when he sent his son to earth, allowed him, it says here, to be tempted in every point exactly as we are.

And yet he didn't sin. For many years in my Christian life, after I was born again. I was defeated, defeated, defeated, defeated.

I was born again, but my life was one of falling into the same sin, repenting, asking the Lord to forgive me. Being cleansed and then falling into the same sin again. And I think that's the experience of many born again Christians.

Until I saw that God had given me an example in Jesus. And for many years I had thought that Jesus wasn't like me. He was God, naturally, he couldn't sin.

But if he had overcome sin as God, he wouldn't be an example for me. He could never say to me, follow me. He could only say, admire me.

Do you think an angel who flies across a river can teach you how to swim? Supposing he flies across a river and says, follow me. And you try getting into the river and you can't fly, you go straight down. What will you say to the angel? You'll say to the angel, I can't follow you.

I can admire you, it's wonderful to see you flying up and down across the river, but I can't follow you. Because I find the law of gravity pulling me down when I get into the water. It doesn't pull you down.

And I would have to say to that angel, if you want to teach me how to swim. Take a body like mine. Which feels the pull of gravity.

Then get into the river and teach me how to swim. Then say, follow me. So when Jesus said, follow me, follow me, follow me.

In fact, that's the word he used most frequently if you read the Gospels. More than any other word. He never said, admire me.

Have you noticed that? Never, not even once. He always said, follow me, follow me. How can I follow him? If he had wings as it were.

If he was different. If he did not feel the pull of temptation that you and I feel. He could not be an example for me.

But it says here, he was tempted in every point exactly as we are. And he didn't sin. I'll give you my testimony, when I understood that for the first time.

It changed my whole life. I saw that Jesus, amazing truth. That though he was God, when he lived on earth.

He lived as a man. Tempted like me. In order to be an example for me.

And fought temptation. Resisted it, just like I have to resist it. Sought the Father for the power of the Holy Spirit.

Got that power and used that power to fight temptation. And that's how he overcame. And that power is offered to me also.

You see, the Holy Spirit's power is like electric power. Now you get the electric company to supply electric power to this building. And the electric power is connected up.

But if you come into this room. And you find it's dark at night. What do you do? You put on the light.

And the electric power gets into those bulbs. And drives the darkness away. That's exactly how we're supposed to overcome sin.

Sin is also darkness. And here's darkness coming at me. And I'm supposed to overcome it.

And God's given me, just like the electric company gave power to this building. God's given me the power of the Holy Spirit. I can use that to turn on the lights.

And drive the darkness away. What happens when you turn on the light? All the darkness goes. So that's how Jesus lived.

As a man, he constantly sought the Father. For the power of the Holy Spirit. Because he had to be an example for us as a man.

And he overcame. And he didn't sin. Now, what's the use of it being written here that he was tempted like us and didn't sin.

If that's not an example for me. I mean, if he did all that as God. I say, well, that's wonderful.

But I can't follow you. But it says in the next verse. Have you noticed that? Therefore.

Have you noticed the therefore in verse 16? Therefore means because Jesus was tempted, did not sin. Therefore. Therefore what? Therefore let us also go to God.

To the throne of grace. And ask him for the same mercy and grace. That we can get help.

When we are in our time of need. What is our time of need? When we are tempted. That's why we need God's help.

To overcome. And we can overcome. Just like Jesus overcame.

Now, they couldn't do this in the Old Testament. Because in the Old Testament, God just gave them a bunch of rules and regulations. And said, go ahead, try and follow it.

They couldn't follow it. Every single one of them failed. And whenever a Christian today.

A born-again Christian reads the Bible. And reads it as a bunch of rules and regulations that he's supposed to follow. He can never measure up to God's standard.

And he'll never get victory over sin. He may look pretty nice on the outside. And look very holy.
But inside. If he's honest. He'll admit.
That he's dirty. True victory. Is that which cleans us on the inside.
You know, Jesus told the Pharisees. You people clean the outside of the cup. But the inside is all dirty.
That is the mark of a Pharisee. The clearest mark of a Pharisee today. Is one whose outside looks so holy.
The way he dresses. The language he speaks. It's all so holy.
But if you were to look into his mind. And his thoughts. And his attitudes.
They're dirty. Now worldly person. Is not a Pharisee.
Because he's dirty on the outside. And dirty inside. Now a person who's dirty on the outside.
And dirty inside. Is not a Pharisee. Because he's not pretending.
The one who is a Pharisee. Is the one who's religious on the outside. You look at him on the outside.
And you listen to him. And you think he's such a holy person. But his inside is dirty.
That's why Jesus said to the Pharisees. You first clean the inside of the cup. And then the outside will be clean.
Any person. For me the definition of a Pharisee is this. Any person.
Who concentrates more on his outer life. Than his inner life. Is a Pharisee.
And that can be me. If I'm more worried about. What other people think of me.
When they see me on the outside. The way I dress. The way I do things.
The way I speak. The religious language I speak. And I'm more concerned.
About that. Than about what God sees in my thoughts. And my attitudes.
And my motives. I am a Pharisee. And how shall I stop being a Pharisee.
It's very simple. Just reverse it. That I want to be from now on.
More concerned. About what God thinks about me on the inside. Than about what other people think about me on the outside.
You know as human beings. Particularly the more religious we are. We are very concerned.
About getting honor from people. You belong to a particular church. And you want to do everything.
Like the people in the church do. Because you want to get honor from people. And there is a tremendous amount of honor seeking.
Among Christians. They speak in a certain language. They give a testimony in a certain way.

They dress in a certain way. They behave in a certain way. They have certain things in their homes.

They won't have certain things in their homes. The whole aim is to get honor from other Christians. And do you know that to seek honor from other Christians.

Is as bad in God's eyes. As committing adultery. I don't know whether you know that.

It's true. That to seek honor from human beings is like worshipping them. It's like idolatry.

There are a lot of people in heathen countries. Where who bow down before idols of wood and stone. And when you seek honor from people in your church.

You're doing the same thing. The only thing that idol is made of flesh and blood. And not made of wood and stone.

You're actually bowing down before that man and saying. Oh my God. I hope you think well of me.

I hope you think I'm a spiritual man. That's honor seeking. It's idolatry.

It's worshipping men. It's caring for the opinions of men. And that's why.

A lot of people never come into this new covenant. Jesus is always concerned about his inner life. And real victory is victory within.

If you've done something to provoke me. And by gritting my teeth. I don't lose my temper at you.

Good. But if I hate you on the inside. And I'm angry with you on the inside.

I haven't got victory really. That's what Buddhism teaches. Grit your teeth.

Control your tongue. You can't do anything about what's in the heart. And if that's all that Jesus does.

Helps me to grit my teeth. That I don't lose my temper. Jesus just made me a good Buddhist.

That's all. Not a Christian. Whereas Jesus gives me something else.

He gives me his Holy Spirit within. To give me victory within. And he was tempted like me.

And he didn't get. He didn't fall. He says therefore we can go to God.

And get grace from our father to overcome. Says in Hebrews chapter 2. I want you to see a verse in Hebrews 2. It says here about the Lord Jesus in verse 17. He had to be made like his brothers.

In all things. So that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest. And because verse 18 he was tempted.

In what he suffered. He's able to help us when we are tempted. See he's gone through it.

That's why he can help us when we're tempted. Our biggest problem. I hope you realize that our biggest problem.

Is not shortage of money. But that we fall when we're tempted. That is our biggest problem.

If you could only see what sin does to your life. The damage and the havoc. It does to your life.

You'd hate sin. More than you hate poverty. Poverty can't destroy our soul.

I've seen people in India. Who are extremely poor. Who can afford to eat only one meal a day.

But who are God fearing. They've learned to hate sin more than poverty. There are very few people in the world like that.

Who hate sin more than poverty. Who are more interested in holiness than in comfort. Who are more interested in purity than money.

But if you want to be a disciple of Jesus. That's how you got to be. That we got to hate sin.

To hate a wrong attitude. To hate anger. To hate jealousy.

To hate bitterness. To hate dirty thoughts. To hate selfishness.

To hate pride. To hate an attitude where you look down on someone. To hate anything that is unchristlike.

And it says here that Jesus had to be made like us in all things. That means to be tempted like us. It doesn't say he was.

And if you read verse 17 carefully. It does not say that he was made like all men. Because all men are born sinners.

Jesus wasn't born a sinner. But it says he was made like his brothers. He was made like us.

Who are born again. It's an amazing verse. He was made like us in all things.

He was not born with a sinful nature. He was born of the Holy Spirit. He didn't have an earthly father.

But he was made in such a way that like us. He could be tempted. Whatever temptation you face in your life.

Remember. Jesus faced it before you. And he overcame.

There are many titles of Jesus. That believers know. But I have found one title of Jesus.

That a lot of believers don't know. And it's in the Bible. Have you heard of Jesus as savior? Yes.

Lord. Shepherd. Good shepherd.

The way, the truth and the life. The light of the world. The resurrection and the life.

All these titles of Jesus we know. High priest. Coming king.

Etc. Have you heard this title of Jesus? Forerunner. Do you know where it's found? It's in Hebrews in chapter 6. Verse 20.

He said Jesus has entered within the veil. Into God's presence. As a forerunner.

For us. That's the title of Jesus. Which is.

I would say the most unknown. Title of Christ. A lot of believers don't even know there's such a title of Jesus in the Bible.

What does it mean to be a forerunner? That means one who runs the same race. We have to run. In front of us.

That's a forerunner. One who is an example for us. The Christian life is likened to a race.

You see that in Hebrews chapter 12. Hebrews 12 verse 1 and 2. It says let us. We have a great cloud of witnesses.

Let's lay aside every sin and let us run the race. Set before us. Looking at Jesus.

We can say who has run the same race in front of us. That's a forerunner. So the wonderful thing about this new agreement is.

We don't have a. Bunch of rules and regulations we're trying to follow. No. I thank God I don't have that.

But we've got a person. Who's tempted like us. Lived on earth like us.

And has given us an example how we are to live. So I got to keep looking at him and learning from him. As to how I am to live on the earth.

If you're a little boy. You can look at Jesus and try and understand how he lived on earth as a boy. If you want to know how to behave towards.

Younger brothers and sisters who irritate you. I can imagine that Jesus must have been irritated by the. Four younger brothers and two sisters.

I mean they tempted him in so many ways. But he never sinned. He never got upset with any of them.

If he did he would have sinned. And the Bible says he never sinned. Can you imagine four brothers and two sisters ganging up on you and.

At home and. Trying to provoke you in so many ways. They do that.

Sometimes you find one good boy whether it's in a school or in a home. And the others who are evil are just angry that this fellow never seems to sin. No matter what we do he never seems to sin.

And they gang up and try to provoke and provoke and provoke. To try and make this fellow sin. And if they've got the man the young boy to lose his temper once they say.

Ah we got it. But they couldn't succeed with Jesus. They couldn't succeed even once.

And they got madder and madder every time they saw him. Living a pure holy life. Then he's an example.

For people who are provoked by others. He's a forerunner for teenagers who are tempted by the passions in their body. Jesus was tempted like us.

I have found great help from this in different situations I faced in my own life. Where I faced a particular temptation. I say Lord Jesus when you were in Nazareth 2000 years ago.

You faced this temptation also. Somewhere in some situation you faced the same temptation I'm facing right now. And I want to react to this temptation the way you reacted in Nazareth 2000 years ago.

I want to have the same reaction. I want to overcome it. I don't want to fall in this sin.

I want you to give me the power of your Holy Spirit. I want you to give me grace so that I can overcome this. And react like you reacted.

And that's been a great encouragement to me. It's a great thing when we have an example. Somebody who faced it before me and who didn't fall.

For years and years and years. Let me just say this in conclusion. A lot of Christians have felt we cannot live a life of overcoming sin.

The best life we can possibly live. Is where we fall and confess it and get up. Fall again and confess and get up.

Fall again and confess and get up. That's about all we can manage. Well that's good.

But I want to say to you that's second best. It's better than not confessing our sin. But there's a better way.

And that is where God keeps us from falling. Jesus never fell. Not even once.

And immediately the devil comes and says. But you can't live like Jesus. That's impossible.

He was different. All your life he's told you he was different. So that you'll never even attempt to follow him.

He'll give you the impression that Jesus was like that angel with wings. How in the world can you follow him? Till you read the Bible which says he was made exactly like you. And he was tempted like you.

And why did the devil hide that from you all these years? Because he didn't want you to follow him. He always wanted you to think that Jesus was different. So you'd never even attempt to follow him.

And so we think oh we got to be defeated. After all we're human. All the believers I know around me they are defeated too.

But so what if they're defeated? I've looked at it like this. Supposing you were living on an island. On an island where nobody knew how to swim.

And you've never in your life seen a human being swimming on water. And somebody comes to that island and says. Do you know that you can actually float on the water? You say that's impossible.

We don't know anybody on this island who floats on water. Every time they go to the water they drown. And you say that's impossible.

Not with our body. No he says we can swim. And then you see him getting into the water.

And swimming. Boy. That's amazing.

All my life I thought I could never swim. That I'd always drown when I get into the water. And here is someone who swims.

And then he comes back in the water. And you want to find out whether he's got the same body as you. Is he really? Is his body different? Is that why he's able to swim? And you discover he's got the same body as you.

And then what happens? You have faith that you can also swim. And when you see that Jesus was made like you. You know what happens? You have faith that you can also overcome sin.

And live like he lived. You can be patient like he was. You can overcome your anger.

Your bitterness. Your love of money. Your selfishness.

And everything. Not overnight. But little by little by little.

The Holy Spirit transforms us it says. From one degree of glory to another. That's why it's so important in our Christian life.

To read the Bible. To see Jesus in it. And not a bunch of rules and regulations.

Let's pray.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/8/SID8282.mp3>

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