

Three Stages of Spiritual Growth - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

God's purpose for our lives is to be blessed and make others blessed, and this is only possible through faith in the new covenant.

Duration: 10:13

Scripture: Genesis 12:2, Matthew 6:33, Mark 12:30, Galatians 3:9, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Faith Development"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of allowing God to bless us and make us a blessing to others, highlighting that fulfilling this purpose is essential in our lives. It urges believers to seek God's will and not wait until the final judgment to realize missed opportunities. The message stresses the significance of faith in God's promises and the need to prioritize Him above all else, as loving God first leads to true blessings and fulfillment in life.

Transcript

I want to turn today to what we looked at last week from Genesis in Chapter 12. You remember I said that God's purpose is, as we've been considering in our last two sessions, that God fills our hearts first with His Spirit and then through us makes us a blessing to other people. And every single one of us can be that.

Now I'll tell you something, you have not accomplished your life's purpose on earth if that doesn't take place in your life. You know, if you don't allow God to bless you and make you a blessing, you have frustrated the purpose with which Jesus died for you on the cross. And it's good to realize it now when we can do something about it, rather than, you know, stand before the Lord in the final day and discover something which surprises us.

I mentioned many times that I have prayed to the Lord that He will not give me any surprises, that I will not get any surprises in the day I stand before Him, because I'll feel terrible when I stand before Him and discover there were certain things I should have done. When I should have done, I mean perhaps just trusted Him more. I'm not talking about me doing something, but trusting Him more so that He could do something in me and through me.

So I want to encourage all of you to pray that prayer. Lord, don't let me get any surprises at the judgment seat of Christ. I'd like to know right now before I leave this earth, and not on the last day before I leave the earth when it's too late to do anything.

The earlier you discover it, the better. I'll tell you honestly, I wish I had known all the things you hear now when I was a young teenager. It would have been so much better, but I discovered some of these things through trial and error over a long period of time.

But that doesn't mean that some of you who are hearing it as teenagers will necessarily allow God to do more in you than He's done in me, or more through you than He's done through me, because it doesn't depend on what age you hear it. It depends on how wholehearted you are. You can be so sluggish that even though you know the truth, it can be just something that resides in your mind and you never use it.

And knowledge that comes into your mind that you don't use and that you keep on accumulating is like somebody sending you a check every week, and you keep on accumulating those checks for many years in your house till they get outdated, and you don't use any of them. You can say, theoretically, I've got all these 500 checks, and each of them is 100,000 rupees. What's the use? Knowledge is like that.

When you get a check, what do you do? You cash it immediately. That's what we're supposed to do with God's promises, the things we read in His Word. When I read a word like the Lord says that the blessing of Abraham is for me, that the Holy Spirit is determined to bless me and make me a blessing, and I'm the only one who can hinder it.

You can't hinder me from being a blessing to the world. You can try as much as you like, though all the demons of hell can't hinder me from being a blessing to the world if God determines that He's going to do it. And all my enemies who hate me and are jealous of me can't hinder me.

It's impossible, because of one reason, because Almighty God is greater than all of them. I mean, that's simple truth. I wish we could understand that.

You know, when people complain that so-and-so is doing this for me, and so-and-so is doing this against me, and so-and-so is scheming against me, and Brother Jack, the devil's hurting me here and hurting me there, I have one word to say to all of them. Your God is so small. Your God is so small.

He can't handle a human being. He can't handle a demon. Whatever God is that, you better read the Bible, because the God of the Bible is the one who created the universe, who runs the universe.

And I'll tell you this, I believe this with all my heart, and I'm not just saying it in some type of empty boasting. If all the people in the world, every single one, seven billion, including all of you, turn against me and fight against me with all your heart and scheme against me and plan to hurt me and kill me or do whatever you like, and all the demons in hell also join, there are millions more there, it won't touch me. The hairs on my head are numbered.

That's how I live. And what I want to say is that's how you can live also if you will have the same faith. You don't have faith, you'll get nothing.

What I'm trying to tell you is that you're missing something by not believing and trusting God to do something in you and through you. It's not a question of ability. Don't sit back and say, oh, Brother Jack has got more gifts than I have.

It's got nothing to do with gifts. God can give you ten times more gifts than he gives me. He's got to do with faith.

Always we try to put the blame on something else. Oh, he's got gifts I don't have. He's got opportunities I don't have.

He's got nothing to do with all that. Just start taking the blame yourself and say, I don't have faith. Or I love my money more than I love Jesus Christ.

I love my job more than I love Jesus Christ. I love my advancement in the world or my plans for the future more than I love Christ. I love my wife more than I love Christ.

That's the reason. But your wife and your job and your boss and the money in the world have not done one million to what Christ did for you. So who should you love more? Do you think you'll love your wife and your husband less if you love Christ? Not at all.

I'll tell you honestly, you'll love them more. Because you never lose anything by loving God with all your heart. Nothing.

The little money you have will be a blessing to you if you love God first, put him first. But all the millions you have will be a curse to you if you put that first. So it's sensible.

Put God first. You know, I'll tell you this, honestly, if I'm the most selfish person in the world, who's only interested in myself and my family, you know what I'd do? I'd put God first. Because that's the best thing I can do for myself and my family.

Aren't we all selfish? I'll tell you what you should do. You want to bless yourself and your family, put God first. Open your being to him and say, Lord, I'm never again going to love anybody or anything more than you.

Your life will be supremely blessed and happy. So we read in Genesis 12. Remember what I've been saying many times and Charles Finney used to say that you've got to say something 10 times before most people understand it.

I'm saying it for the third time. So you know what the next seven messages are going to be on. The Lord says, Genesis 12 verse 2, I will, that's what I want to stress.

The old covenant was you shall, you shall, you shall not, you shall not. But here it is. I will, I will, I will.

You see how wonderful it is when the responsibility is taken by somebody else. I mean, if my little boy is trying to fix his cycle, which the wheel came off or sponsored or something and he's struggling, struggling, he doesn't know what to do. If I tell him, listen, son, I'll do that.

Ah, what a relief he has. Dad's going to do it. Great.

He can go and sit and relax. That's exactly how I feel to be freed from the law, which told me you shall, you shall, you shall, you shall not, you shall not. And here I'm struggling, struggling, struggling, struggling.

Like my son trying to fix a cycle. He doesn't know what to do next. And then I tell him, listen, leave that.

I'll do it. What a relief. And that's exactly why the devil never wants you to enter the new covenant.

He wants you to live and groan under the law all your life, struggle, be miserable, make your wife's life miserable, make your husband's life miserable, make your children's life miserable, make the lives of the

brothers and sisters around you miserable because you live under the law. Instead of being a blessing, you'll be a nuisance and a problem and jealous of others and ungrateful, et cetera, et cetera. Every wretched thing that we got from Adam, which he got from the devil.

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