

# Three Virtues to Pursue

by Zac Poonen

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*Growing in wisdom, humility, and living before God's face are essential for a genuine Christian life, as exemplified by Jesus.*

**Duration:** 1:04:50

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 24:24, Matthew 6:33, Luke 1:1, Acts 1:1

**Topics:** "Virtue"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of not mistaking extroversion for discipleship in the Christian faith. He warns against dominating conversations and encourages humility and a heart for serving others. The speaker also highlights the need for Christians to rely on God to move the hearts of others, including bosses and leaders. He shares the example of Hudson Taylor, a man who sought to learn how to move men through God. The sermon concludes with a reminder that the response of the heart to Jesus is what truly matters in becoming a person of God.

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## Transcript

I want to speak on three things, and before I speak on those three things, just some introductory comments. As young people, when we are zealous, which is a very good thing, we must remember what the Bible says, the glory of young people is their zeal. And if you are not zealous when you are young, you say something is wrong.

The glory of older people, older means mature spiritually, is their wisdom. There's a lot of difference between zeal and wisdom. And if you have zeal and wisdom, it's really great.

That's what you should strive for. Jesus grew in wisdom. Let me show you two verses concerning Jesus.

First of all, Luke chapter 2, it says about Jesus twice. Luke chapter 2 verse 40, he kept increasing in wisdom. Verse 52, he kept increasing in wisdom.

That is when he was a child. Don't try to follow Jesus when he's 30 years old, walking on the water, casting out demons, preaching. That's not where to start.

You can reach there. Start where he started as a child, growing in wisdom. The most important thing that a young person needs to do is to grow in wisdom.

You know there are some older people who have a lot of wisdom, but don't have any zeal. They are not passionate about what they believe. Whereas Jesus, it says about Jesus when he drove the money changers out of the temple, his disciples remembered in John 2.17, remember that it was written, zeal for your house will consume me, burn me up.

Jesus was like a burning bush, burning with zeal. But because he had grown in wisdom for 30 years, his zeal could be directed in a wise way. Now when you are young, it's good to be zealous, but you must acknowledge that wisdom doesn't come overnight.

And sometimes when you're zealous, you can despise others who don't appear to be zealous, but it may be because they are a little wiser than you. A zealous person wants to do things immediately, and he can be very critical. When young people are very critical about this and that, and even about sin and about things going wrong in a church, you can think that they are very radical.

They may be, if they are also humble enough to acknowledge, I don't yet have wisdom. I have seen young people, bachelors, criticize the children of elders until they grew up and got children themselves, and their children are a mess. Because when they were young, they criticized something which they had no experience in.

We have worked in CFC, I have worked in CFC with Ian for 32 years, and I'll tell you something. The folks who have come to me and criticized me the most and told me how to run the church are the people who have never planted one church themselves. Those who plant churches realize how difficult it is.

It's like the man I heard, whether it's a true story or not, I don't know. When he was a bachelor, he wrote a book called Ten Commandments for Parents. And when he got married and had a few children, he withdrew the book from publication.

He probably wrote another book called Help. A father who has ten children may not write a book on how to raise children, but a bachelor knows everything about raising children. You must remember that Jesus only spoke about what he had done.

Acts of the Apostles, chapter 1, verse 1. That was part of his wisdom. Acts 1, verse 1. He did and taught. The whole book of Luke, the first account I composed Theophilus, this is Luke writing, the first account was the Gospel of Luke, was all about what Jesus began to do and teach.

What came first? Doing, then teaching. How many hours do you think Jesus took to prepare the sermon called Help? The Sermon on the Mount. Thirty years.

Right. I've had people come and ask me, Brother Zach, how long did it take to prepare that sermon? I say, forty years. Jesus didn't sit down overnight.

I mean, it's good to, no, I'm not against writing notes. I have tried for years and years to tell, in all our churches, I tell the elders, please write notes for your sermons. I used to do that a lot in my younger days.

I still have them, detailed notes with verses and points. But do you know how many elders in our churches, we have about seventy elders, do you know how many of them listen to me? Less than five percent. That's why I get complaints from most of the churches, Brother Zach, our elders are boring.

Will you please tell them that? Now, you brothers and sisters, take pains to write your notes whenever you share something anywhere. That's a mark of humility. I did it extensively in my younger days.

And when you get to my age, if you've done it for forty years, you may not need it. But that's a different thing. So, it's like a doctor doing his first surgical operation, he probably needs all the instructions there.

If he's done five hundred operations, he doesn't need the instructions anymore. It's like that. You know, it's like, here we had a problem with this camera and recorder, and someone who knows about it comes and fixes it in five seconds.

There are others who don't know it. We work on it for hours and we don't get there. So, in all these, everything in life, you do and teach.

Why is it you have never heard me speak about urging you to go to North India? Can you tell me? Because I haven't gone and lived there in some village myself. The big thing I have against missionary organizations in India is that all their leaders live in the comfort of the South, send their children to good schools in the South and tell other people to go and live in some village in North India where their children don't get a proper education. To me, Jesus would never do that.

That is why I don't have any respect for a lot of the mission leaders in India. I say, you must do first. Is it necessary to go to North India? Yes.

But who can speak about it? One who has gone there. I have often said to people who have never been in full-time Christian work, don't ever criticize full-time Christian workers. You have never been in that yourself.

I have been in it. I have a right to speak about people like that. But if you try to imitate me, you will go wrong because you have never given up your job at any time to serve the Lord full-time.

So don't just imitate what somebody else does. Remember, these are some principles you must bear in mind if you want to grow in wisdom. Do and teach.

Very often you can see in little groups of people, I remember when I went for selection for the National Defence Academy, I was just 14 and a half years old, and there were group discussions. They test you for four days in all types of situations to see whether you are fit to be a military officer. And one of the things they put you in is in little groups, and they see whether you sort of control the whole group with your words and discussions, etc.

Now, that's okay if you want to be a military officer. But if you want to help people spiritually, that may not always be the wise thing. You see very often in groups of young people that some people just dominate the conversation.

Don't follow their example. They may be extroverts, but they are not disciples. Many Christians mistake extroverts for disciples.

They see someone who is an extrovert who is always talking, talking, and saying doing this, that, and the other, and say, I wish I could be like that. I say, please don't be like that. An extrovert is not necessarily a disciple.

An extrovert may be a loud-mouthed, proud snob. And the other person who is a little quieter, who obeys the word which says, be quick to hear and slow to speak, may be a better disciple. Don't think the person who speaks the loudest and has got the maximum number of opinions to offer is always the spiritual one.

I'm just giving you little warnings so that you don't follow wrong examples. Because many of those people who are so loud-mouthed and express themselves all the time, I'm just trying to show how dominating they are. I don't believe Jesus was like that.

I think Jesus would speak. He would listen. He would give a fair opportunity if there were others around to listen to them as well.

So these are little things that if you learn, you will really grow in wisdom. And you must learn that when you are young. I say this particularly because some of you may not be extroverts.

Some of you may be introverts who are always very quiet. And you may think, oh well, I can never be a disciple. You can be a disciple.

I know when I was a young Christian, I was an introvert. And I said, Lord, I want to follow you. That's the main thing in my life.

And I want to say to all of you, remember Jesus did not say, go into all the world and make extroverts. He said, go into all the world and make disciples. So don't envy a person who is loud-mouthed, who can give an opinion on every subject under the sun, and who takes control immediately.

That's alright in the military, but not in Christianity. In Christianity, very often, it's the person who is quiet, who may have more wisdom, and who is not always eager. Be careful about people who are always eager to give you advice.

Many of you have known me for many years. How often do I come and give you advice? You should do this, you should do that, you should do the other thing. You can ask my 70 elders how many letters I write to them.

Almost none. When people come to me for advice, I'm ready to give it. I give it straight from the shoulder.

See, the person who is very eager to give you advice very often has got the least amount of wisdom, even among older people. Beware of older brothers and sisters who are eager to pounce on you to give you advice. And beware especially of younger sisters and brothers who are very eager to pounce on you and give you advice.

These are little principles. Grow in wisdom, and let your life be such a light that people come to you and say, Hey, I want to get some advice from you on this. Then give it.

It's far better that way. You know, salt doesn't make a lot of noise in the food, but boy, you really know whether there's salt in the food or not. Light, if a tube light starts making sound, you know it's about time to replace it, right? A good tube light doesn't make any sound at all.

Jesus said, you're like salt, you're light. And I tell you, a light doesn't have to shout and say, I'm here. You come into a dark room and you know immediately whether the light is on or not.

You put one spoon of food into your mouth and you know immediately whether there's salt or not. That's how we must be. Think if you can be a young person, that you can come into a room, you don't even have to open your mouth, and people sense, well, that's a godly person.

He doesn't even open the mouth. I've heard of young people like that, you know, people sitting, talking, all types of filth. And this young person comes along and they immediately sober up in their conversation.

Boy, wouldn't you like to be like that? He didn't say anything. And that girl or boy may be a very friendly type of person, not critical, but there was something about that. You know, I remember, I'll never forget a scene I saw in a movie called Ben-Hur, about where Jesus, you know, you don't see Jesus' face, but here was Ben-Hur being dragged by the Roman soldiers to the galleys and he passes by Nazareth, and the Roman soldiers would refuse to give these slaves any drink.

And there was a man, you could only see his back, and you knew it was Jesus. He decided to give water to these poor, struggling slaves. And the Roman centurion said, lifted up his whip or something to stop him, and Jesus just looked him in his face, and that Roman centurion walked away.

I've never forgotten that scene in my life. I said, Lord, that's how I want to be. A man with a dignity, a man who knows God, that the greatest men in the world will recognize there's a man who knows God.

You know, that's how we can, but you can start working on it when you're young. A young girl, a young boy, it's all got to do with wisdom, it's all got to do with living before God's face, where the glory and the power of God and the authority of God is upon your life, and people recognize it. You know, you may not be gifted, not everybody has gift to speak, but the authority of God can be in a person who doesn't even have much ability to speak.

You know, one of the, among all the speakers I heard in Christendom, speaking in English, I would say one of the worst speakers in the English language was a man called Brother Bakht Singh. Most people couldn't even understand his English. But I never met a man in India, till today, who had such spiritual authority like him.

You could see that in his face, there was a radiance, there was the glory of God on it. On the day of his funeral, there was a rainbow right around the sun. I've never seen one like that in my whole life.

God honored that man. But if you heard him speak, you wouldn't even be able to understand his English. Most people understood him because he was translated into Telugu or Tamil.

So I saw there, you know, I knew him as a young man, I saw spiritual authority there. He was not a great eloquent speaker, but he was a man who lived before God's face. And then I saw that as a young man, I said, Lord, this is what I want to be.

I want to be a man who, when people come to know me, they say, there's a man who knows God. However I speak or not is secondary. So I want to say to all of you, be a man or a woman who knows God.

Not a loud mouthed advice giver. Not a busy body or a gossip. But one who knows God.

And now I want to come to these, you know, let me just say, you've often heard me use this proverb, it's better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. What does it mean to curse the darkness? Supposing it was night here, and the lights were on, and suddenly the power went off. Like it happens often in India.

And a whole lot of people say, oh, there's electricity board, they don't give us a warning, and there are different, different criticisms, and one sensible person shines a torch. That's the only sensible man in that whole crowd. It's better to put on a torch, shine a torch, than keep on cursing the darkness.

The same thing, you know, we can look around at Christendom today and see, oh, that church is like this, and this group is like this, and that brother is like this, and that preacher is like this, and it's all true. It's all darkness. I remember in my younger days, I saw so many wrong things, and the Lord said, why don't you do it the right way? Are all these preachers running after money? You be a preacher who doesn't run after money.

Are all these groups using the gift of tongues in the wrong way? Okay, you build a church where they do it the right way. Whatever you see wrong in a church, the Lord says to you, don't curse the darkness, light a candle. Do it the right way.

Are these people bringing up their children the wrong way? Good that you saw it. You get married and bring up children the right way. And then you realize, when it says about Jesus, He did and taught how difficult it is.

It's easy to teach. It's easy to give advice. It's easy to be a loud-mouthed advice giver.

Do and teach like Jesus did. And when it says in Acts 1.1, He did and taught what Jesus began to do and teach. We can say the Acts of the Apostles is what Jesus continued to do and teach through His Apostles.

So what am I supposed to do 2,000 years later? I'm supposed to continue to do and teach what Jesus began to do and teach. But I must do first. What I haven't done, I have to be honest and say, I haven't reached there yet.

I'm climbing the mountain. I want to reach the top. For example, I speak about never be anxious.

But I can't honestly say that I'm completely free from all anxiety. But I say it's a mountain I'm climbing. I haven't reached the top of this Mount Everest yet.

But I'm climbing and I'm a lot higher today than I was 10 years ago. And I invite you to follow me. I don't have to reach the peak before I tell people to follow me.

No. I mean, you may reach the peak only when you get to heaven. It'll be too late to tell people to follow you.

But while you're climbing, if you've climbed 1,000 feet, someone who's at 100 feet, you can tell them follow me. You can't tell the fellow who's at 5,000 feet, he's ahead of you. But you can tell the fellow who's behind you, Hey, we're climbing this 29,000 feet mountain, come follow me.

He's at 100 feet and you're at 1,000 feet. There are always people whom you can say follow me at different stages on this mountain peak. It could be different areas.

So, three things I want to speak about. And you see them all in Jesus. First of all, faith.

And not the wrong understanding of faith that we have in the world today. The Christian world today speaks about faith, faith, faith is the thing which they speak on every television program. But if you look, examine it closely, it's a counterfeit currency note.

It's not a real currency note. There are people who make 500 rupee currency notes that look exactly like the real thing. And if you're not careful, you can be fooled.

And if you don't look carefully and come, how to find out if a currency note is 500, if I have a doubt, I will take it to the reserve bank. They look at it, they've got their machines with ultraviolet lights and all that, and they say, ah, that's wrong. I saw a machine like that in a checkout counter in a supermarket once.

I think it was Dubai or somewhere. And they put that Durham note under the ultraviolet, they immediately know whether it's genuine or not. So, how do we find out? Well, that faith which is being preached over there on television and many preachers, is it genuine or not? Very simple.

Let's go to the reserve bank, let's go to the Bible, and see whether Jesus, it's in this ultraviolet light of Jesus' life that I immediately detect, is this what Jesus preached about? Let me see, let me read the Gospels. Did Jesus tell me how to get a better house and a better car, or was that what he preached about all the time? Did he even teach how to get healed? Shall I surprise you? You know, Jesus never preached one sermon on healing. He never told anybody how to get healed.

Today we have multitudes of sermons on healing. Jesus healed thousands, but he never preached one sermon on healing. Today we have thousands of sermons on healing, and occasionally one or two people healed.

Don't you think there's a difference? What should you be doing if you think healing is important? Heal! Don't preach sermons on healing. What I hear today is a lot of sermons on healing, and a lot of emotional building up of people with songs, and moving emotional things, and television cameras focusing on somebody with tears coming down their face, and all that type of stuff. And they say, OK, now, trust the Lord.

It's a psychological gimmick. Don't be fooled by all that. Do you think Jesus did all that? Put it under the ultraviolet light.

Check it out. Faith. The Bible says, let us look unto Jesus, Hebrews 12, 2, the author and finisher of our faith.

Now if I held up a book here and said, I am the author, do you know what it means? That means from the first word to the last word, I wrote that book. When you say, Jesus is the author of your faith, that means from beginning to end, it is his faith. What he wrote in your heart.

Not what some TV preacher wrote in your heart. I want to ask you, the faith that you say you have, did you get it from some TV preacher? I feel sorry for you. No wonder your Christian life is so messed up.

Because you got your faith from that TV preacher, or some Pentecostal magazine, or book, which you heard some testimony from somebody. I've heard all these people. But I would not let them write into my heart only one person has the right to write into my heart, Jesus, the author of my faith.

That's how I have preserved my life. And I'll tell you as a result of that, you know what is one of the marks of faith? You always praise the Lord. I'll show you that from scripture.

Psalms 106. You got to make sure your faith is genuine. Psalm 106, verse 12.

It's a very important word to remember. They believed his words, they sang his praise. When you believe God's words, you will sing his praise.

When you don't sing his praise, you don't have faith. I don't care what you say you believe, you don't have the faith of which Jesus is the author. When you complain and grumble about your circumstances, when you complain and grumble about the way people are treating you, what are you saying? You're saying the devil's got into my life.

The devil's got control of my circumstances. God is not anywhere around. The devil's in control.

That's what you're saying. I refuse to honor the devil like that by complaining. Complaining about the food or complaining about something not done.

Something not done by my wife which I think she should do at home. I'm saying well the devil runs my home. Is the devil running your home? That's what you're saying when you complain.

Why didn't you do this? You know, Christian homes in this country and around the world are full of Christian so called believer tongue speaking husbands and wives who are yelling at each other and complaining against each other and this and that and the other. And as long as we keep on complaining, you're saying God is powerless here. It's no use asking God to change the situation.

He is powerless. The devil is in full control here. I want to say the devil isn't.

Not in my life, not in my home, not in my ministry. Now if you knew some of the problems I've faced in 32 years in the different churches, it's like having 40 teenage children. But I don't complain.

When I face problems with my elders or different churches, I say God, you're on the throne. They believed his words, they sang his praise. Do you want a life like that? Don't let some TV preacher write his faith into your heart.

They get angry, they complain, they even, I've heard one of those lady preachers say, I got angry against my husband. She should be thoroughly ashamed to say that from a pulpit. What in the world is she getting up and preaching that message there to encourage all the women there to get angry at their husbands? Can you imagine Jesus saying, I got angry, I lost my temper, I couldn't do, I'm human.

Jesus was human. He was tempted like we are. He was tempted to get angry, but he didn't.

He was concerned for the glory of God's house. That's why he lost his temper when people tried to make money in the name of religion. He was furious.

Drove them out. But otherwise, they slapped him or spat on his face or anything. Didn't have a place to lay his head.

No complaints. Faith means you believe God is in control of your circumstances and that God is almighty. You can ask him to change things.

I'll tell you a story that I heard of Hudson Taylor who was a great missionary to China. You know, these are the men who challenged me when I was young. Not these television preachers.

Not one of these television preachers I admire. I'll tell you honestly. I'll tell you who I admire.

People like C.T. Studd. World famous cricketer. Millionaire who gave up his cricketing career.

Gave up his money. Gave it all away and kept 500 pounds for his wife who was getting married and he told his wife I've kept 500 pounds for you and she said What did Jesus tell the rich young ruler? Oh. So he gave away that 500 pounds also.

He was determined to get a wife just like him and they both went to China and he was so sick that the medical board said you can't be a missionary. Go away. No medical board would accept him in any mission.

So you know what he did around the age of 50? He started his own mission. Nobody would accept me. What to do? I go on my own then and he went to Africa.

To the Congo. There were no believers in that place where he went to when he died there were about 10,000. He used to live in a little hut and call it Buckingham Palace.

That's the residence of the Queen of England. He used to write from there and he never went home. He was there.

His wife couldn't be there with him because she was sick and he had to look after the children in England. 14 years they stayed apart. She came once to see him.

And when she said goodbye she walked away. She never looked back. She just went on.

See these were men. They were not loud mouthed advice givers. They did something with their life.

These are the men I admired. There was sacrifice. There was faith.

And see these studies to tell people when you come to bring your luggage as a missionary to Congo bring it in a coffin. Okay? Because you may die here and we don't want to waste wood making a coffin for you. Bring your don't bring a suitcase bring a coffin and put your luggage inside that and come here.

I mean if you're coming here for fun like today you know we have people go on short term missions. They come for two weeks to India and go back to testify. These people can you compare them with C.D. Studd? We have such a third rate good for nothing useless Christianity today which is not author of their faith.

I tell you I like that 19th century Christianity of C.D. Studd and Hudson Taylor. I was telling you about Hudson Taylor. He was a man who wanted to learn how to move men through God.

You see it's a wonderful lesson to learn. God can move men's hearts. God can move your boss's heart.

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord. He can turn it wherever he wills whoever he is. Okay.

So Hudson Taylor worked for somebody and that man would pay him at the end of the week. You know that they were paid at the end of the week those days in England. And he said listen I've got a very poor memory Hudson Taylor.

If I forget to pay you on Friday at the end of the week please remind me because I may walk off and not pay you. So Hudson Taylor decided this is a great opportunity to trust God to remind him especially if he's got a poor memory. I really know whether there's a God in heaven or not.

And he worked and he would trust God every week he got his pay and one day one Friday or whenever the week finished his boss walked off without paying him. And Hudson Taylor didn't have any money. He said what to do? Lord you're in control.

And he was about to close up the office and his boss had gone off about to close up the office he finds his boss coming back and his boss said I forgot something here I just want to pick it up. So he went in still no talk about paying Hudson Taylor he picked up that thing and as he was going out he said oh by the way did I pay you this week? And Hudson Taylor said no he didn't. Oh you should have reminded me.

Anyway here it is. Can you imagine how that strengthened Hudson Taylor's faith when he went to China and decided to follow the same policy in supporting not only himself but a lot of missionaries. I remember another time where I heard in China now it was in China years later there was some urgent need for money for the mission work and he prayed to God Lord we need this money within a few days I don't remember the exact details but this is how it was I need it by tomorrow or next week and within the next 2-3 days a cheque comes from England for that exact amount but remember it took about 3 months by ship to come this cheque so when was the cheque posted? which arrived 3 days after Hudson Taylor prayed.

Have you read a verse in Isaiah 65 verse 24 which says before they call I will answer here is an example of that it's amazing these men they had a faith which was something that resulted in something for the kingdom of God George Muller you should read the biographies of these men I tell you that will challenge you much more to the real faith faith for the supernatural that there is a God in heaven you know you must have this testimony at the end of your life that there is no explanation for your life except that you got a loving father in heaven think of some of the folks sitting right here who come from Hindu homes do you know how much they have to sacrifice in order to be a Christian many of you who are from Christian homes just don't have a clue of what it means I visited a Hindu home

recently in Bangalore and I saw them with their idolatry and all that whole atmosphere and I believe God took me there just to give me a feel of what a Hindu who gets converted to Christ in their home has to go through I really had a far greater appreciation for those who come from Hindu homes who find so many things so difficult when they go back to their home I mean they're so delighted to be in the midst of God's people because it's darkness back in their home remember that whenever you see a Hindu convert it's not easy for them I've heard of some very difficult things that people have done to some of our brothers and sisters who have been converted from Hinduism in the villages in Tamil Nadu one of them was made to stand in a circle in the village in the hot sun and say you can't get

out of there until you renounce your Christianity of course he refused to renounce his Christianity finally they got tired and left him they make it difficult for these women to draw water from the village well but they hold on to their faith when Jesus has written faith in our heart we're willing to die for it the other thing I want to say is there's a lot of difference between faith in the mind and faith in the heart many of us we think we've got faith it's only in our mind we believe all the right things in our mind and we have logically come to the conclusion there must be a God because after all if all this stars and all run in perfect precision there must be a God right and various proofs of why the Bible is true and all that so I believe yeah it's right and then I found certain

people who seem to trust in this God so there must be a God it's all in the mind I've come to a logical conclusion like 2 plus 2 is 4 so 4 plus 4 is 8 so I come to a conclusion like mathematical thing and that type

of faith won't hold you in a time of trouble faith is through a personal knowledge of God our Father and of Jesus you know there are various expressions people use to find out whether a person is born again born again converted I've accepted the Lord I've given my life to Christ but the best of all these titles is knowing the Lord so I prefer to ask you do you know Jesus that's what I want to ask all of you do you know Jesus if I were to ask you do you know Dr.

Manmohan Singh Prime Minister of India do you know about him do you know him you probably can rattle off a lot of facts about him do you know him personally that you can know about love in the mind and know about love in the heart and I tell you there's a world of differences between the two the person who can write a .

Do you know Jesus in your heart and I believe that if you have faith in your heart you will experience certain super natural things in your life it may not be physical healing but something for which there's no human explanation and God did something there for which there was no way of doing it unless God intervened there it wouldn't have happened and you don't think of it just as an opportunity to give a testimony about it to somebody but it helped you to know God better we must all have a few experiences like that in our life that's why God allows us to come into a difficult situation for example we read once Jesus urged the disciples to cross the sea I don't know if and it says as soon as they went out to sea they faced a storm and he was not in the boat why would Jesus urge the

disciples to go out to sea because he knew a storm was coming and he wanted them to face the storm then he came walking on the water and still the storm now would you rather face a storm and have Jesus still the storm or would you rather sit comfortably on the shore never face the storm which do you want you know this is the message of the gospels there's no problem Jesus cannot solve there is no problem Jesus cannot solve you may not solve it the way you think it should be solved but we must have the spirit of a conqueror I told you the other day you're programmed to be a conqueror when God made man he said let them rule you have been programmed to be a conqueror being a conqueror is in your DNA to use modern language it's in your DNA to be a conqueror if you're a Christian not if you're

not a Christian because when we receive Christ into our heart you know there's a song we sing a life of overcoming a life of ceaseless praise and one line of it goes would you know the secret of constant victory let in the overcomer and let him conquer thee so the secret of victory the secret of overcoming is to let the overcomer come inside and overcome you if the overcomer Jesus has come inside and overcome you that's the secret of overcoming because when he overcomes you he can be an overcomer you can be an overcomer in your life so we need to really come to this matter of heart faith you know I have found more faith in the simple villagers in our village churches than the intellectual clever people in CFC who can explain everything some of you may think boy what a privilege we have in

CFC to come to these youth camps and which our poor village churches folks don't have you know in spite of all this you may find those fellows have got more faith than you because faith is not a question of you've understood so much in this camp do you think that's produced faith in your heart in a difficult situation you face next week yeah you've got all the principles but if you don't know Jesus today there are people who study Peter's two letters in a theological seminary and get a doctor's degree Peter himself if he went to that seminary wouldn't get a doctor's degree he knew he knew the Lord what do you want seek to know the Lord to know Jesus personally and that's the difficult situations you go through where you come to have faith faith is so important the second thing I want to

speaking about is humility again Jesus is the example you've often heard me say the three secrets of the Christian life are humility humility humility that's it humility means you don't think you're special you are special to God but you don't think you're more special than somebody else that's what I mean I believe I'm very special to God I believe that in the whole world I was the only sinner and everybody else was good Jesus would have come from all the way from heaven just for me I hope you realize how important I am not because I'm a great preacher but because Jesus loves me you know the title I like is the title John used about himself in John's gospel what did he call himself the disciple who loved Jesus did I get it wrong not the disciple who loved Jesus but the disciple whom can you

say that about yourself I like it what am I a disciple whom Jesus loved you know what security brings into my life what are you disciple whom Jesus loved that's it are you superior to that other guy no no no he's also a disciple whom Jesus loves but John you're 95 years old you're a great saint yeah yeah I still think of myself as a disciple whom Jesus loved I tell you that was the mark of these apostles they were not like these great like these so-called great film star evangelists I can't imagine John being like that follow the example of these apostles my dear brothers and sisters we have a third great good for nothing useless counterfeit version of Christianity going around the world today God has called us to go back to the faith of the apostles humility where you don't see I think

humility is a thing of the heart it's something before God it's not something I have to show before men it's not by my coming in physically washing your feet and getting some honor you know the Pope does that on Good Friday gets 12 people who have washed and perfumed their feet to come in then he comes with a bucket of water and washes it what is this that's not what Jesus did when Jesus washed Peter's feet his feet were stinking he hadn't washed and perfumed it it wasn't a ritual so when we do dirty jobs you know like I always said in CFC the equivalent of washing the feet is cleaning the toilets some dirty job that's washing the feet today so Jesus you see humility is the thing of the heart where I don't consider myself superior to you and it's an attitude and when you talk to a person

you can find out pretty quickly whether he thinks he's superior to you or not it's very easy among young people to find out when they're sitting talking together somebody who thinks they know everything they're superior to everybody they're smarter than everybody that's not the person getting the maximum grace in that group no see I believe that we must this looks like two contradictory things but they're true I believe I'm a very valuable in God's essence so it's not a question of low self-esteem oh I'm good for nothing I'm useless I'm not good for nothing how can I be good for nothing when God put my name in his book before the worlds were created before the worlds were created my name was in God's book how can I be useless and if your name was there I don't have any low self-esteem

about myself at all I believe I'm a very important person in God's eyes but I don't think I'm important than any of you sitting here I'll tell you honestly I don't believe that I'm more important than any of you sitting here but I'm very important in God's eyes that's the balance that you must maintain I want to ask you young people all of you some of you who have been longer in the church some of you who think you know more than others about the Bible or think you have more advice to give to other people I want to ask you do you really believe really deep down in your heart that all these people sitting here are equal to you at least or perhaps a little better than you may not be in smartness ability cleverness education but perhaps in God's eyes they are better it's good to esteem the

others as more important than yourself it's a mark of humility esteem the others as more important don't think of yourself and associate with lowly people I'll tell you one mark of a humble person I'll tell you

something absolutely honestly when I sit with those poor uneducated villagers on the floor in our Tamil Nadu churches I feel that they are just as valuable to God and to me as you brothers are some of you are very educated and clever I don't see any difference between you and them do you associate yourself with people of low abilities or do you only associate yourself with people who are of your level what do you think Jesus would do it says though he was God he became a man there's a lovely verse always he's a great encourager he can look at a person like Nathaniel and say oh

there's a man in whom there's no guile he can look at a Roman centurion who never read the bible oh I found such great faith a humble man can do that proud people one mark of a proud person is they can never compliment another they can never appreciate others they are miserly with money they are miserly with their appreciation of others Jesus was very generous with appreciating others he wasn't always afraid oh they may get puffed up they may get puffed up it's crazy people who think like that Jesus didn't think like that he appreciated I've learned some things from him there was a humility about him he never said things that hurt people I'll tell you know once I was in China and the Chinese people many of those young people are all very slim I think it's because they drink hot tea at the

end of every meal it's probably one of the reasons anyway they are very slim these young people and they asked me brothers they are very direct why are some people fat believers fat it's Bible quiz you know Bible question answer time why are some believers so fat because some believers sitting next to me happen to be fat they were asking me so I don't think I'm very slim myself I try to be but anyway I said I think God has allowed some people to be fat to test what the slim people will say about them you know how the slim people who are so proud of their being so nice figures and all that and who think they are very disciplined in their eating habits and all that see some people are fat because it's in their genes no matter how little they eat they still become fat and some other people

eat as much as they like and they still remain thin it's not necessarily a proof that they are fasting and praying or any such I'm not fooled by all that I've lived long enough in this world to know that some of these things got to do with constitution but the same principle applies in many areas we heard about snoring a little while ago do you think a person who snores ever will make fun of another person who snores no who are the people who make fun of other people who snore always the people who don't snore themselves and they don't realize and they don't realize that they are being tested by God to see whether they despise somebody and there's a little bit of despising there which comes out you don't realize you know what's the solution for that would Jesus say it would Jesus despise

someone who are not really going to make much in the Christian life they can have all the theory in their head but they don't know the principle of sacrifice and I've seen certain people from rich homes who are much more disciplined in their spending the way you spend your money lavishly on unnecessary things is an indication of whether you've known Jesus or not I know as a young Christian I'm not here to tell you how you should spend your money I would only say study the earthly life of Jesus see how he lived the people whose ministry I have been most blessed by are the people who have a principle of sacrifice in their life God runs this world on the principle of sacrifice he showed that on the cross of Calvary if you haven't understood that principle you will never grow in wisdom when I

was a young person about 22 years old God gave me a verse and I'll give it to you 2 Samuel 24 24 easy to remember 24 24 2 Samuel 24 24 where David says concerning a sacrifice he was going to make to God I will never offer to God that which costs me nothing that verse is stuck with me for years I will never offer to the Lord that which costs me nothing you know if you really want to serve the Lord I'll tell you you must be

willing for a life of sacrifice let others enjoy themselves that's not the way for you and me that doesn't mean that you can't have a higher education I say if you can get a master's opportunity to study and you have the finances to study and you didn't study you're probably downright lazy don't excuse your laziness calling it spirituality it's not I think in India

particularly it's very good to have good study and a lot of people think that Christians are these uneducated people who don't have any interest in studies and all the Dalits and schedule castes and they say really capable educated people don't become Christians I was determined to prove that wrong in my life I taught my children to prove that wrong in their life and I want to say to all of you prove by your life that you can be a very educated person and a committed Christian at the same time you can be very efficient in your job and a committed Christian it's not the fellows who don't have jobs who become Christians no there are people like that God calls also but why not people who are also so when I say sacrifice it doesn't mean that you can't get education or you can't play games or

you can't have music no I think we can play a lot of games I think if Jesus you know a lot of people speak about visions and Jesus saying that there was a little boy I heard in the United States who said I had a vision of Jesus playing baseball with me I said I believe that vision more than these other fellows who see visions of Jesus telling them some prophetic thing and all that I believe in a Jesus who would play games with us he was down to earth there's nothing wrong in music it's all a question of keeping everything under control so sacrifice doesn't mean don't get the wrong idea like the Hindu sanyasi gets about going out into the jungles or forsaking everything and I don't mean that Jesus wasn't a sanyasi please remember that he didn't wear saffron dress or any special dress he

dressed just like everybody else and lived a normal life but his life was a life of sacrifice he denied himself many things in order to help us there's a lovely verse in John 17 which I've never forgotten if you want to be a blessing to other people my dear young people listen to this verse John 17 it says here for their sakes verse 19 for their sakes I sanctify myself I set myself apart from many things in this world for their sake that they also may be sanctified that means Jesus denied himself many things that he could have done for our sake and if you want to be useful to the Lord I'll tell you this if you are willing to deny yourself many things that you could have had I remember a very godly brother I knew who used to say I deny myself many things so that I can have a little more to

give to some poor people some poor brothers boy he was one of the godliest men I ever knew on this earth but I'm not surprised he used to collect stamps you know from envelopes and all that and sell them and not use one cent of that for himself he had enough to earn to care for himself that was just to give to others you know there are people like that like the little boy I heard who in the United States who his dad said he'd give him a cycle on his twelfth birthday and when the twelfth birthday came along he said dad can you give me the money instead of the cycle and he took that money and sent it to some Christian mission ah boy I have great hopes for that boy if he continues like that what will he become a man of god one day I was down in Tamil Nadu sometime ago there was a there was a

girl there who testified it was a mission conference I was at young Tamil girl and interestingly from a despised senior she testified that her mother was she told her mother mom instead of employing a maid I'll do all the sweeping and everything doing in this house that and give me the money that you pay the maid mom said okay you do all the work that a maid supposed to do she did it and she was going to school and then did this all in her extra time and she took all that money which she got from her mother and gave it for mission work in North India I say does CFC really think they are better than these CSI people you know

how Jesus used to tell stories about the Samaritans whom Jews despised and always the good person was a Samaritan not a Jew in Jesus parables the public in whom the

Jews despised he was a good person in the parable or then I heard another testimony in the same mission conference of a young girl came up to testify she was a mother with a little child said when I was young I wanted to be a missionary in North India but my parents just wouldn't let me they got me married off to somebody I couldn't control it but I've got a child I want to train him to be a missionary do CFC people really are they really more spiritual than the CSI people this is CSI sister we are going to get a lot of surprises when we get to heaven we will find the first or last the first on earth in Christendom are those who have got plenty of knowledge plenty of advice to give others plenty of this that and the other the first in heaven will be those who sacrifice the most those who

did things without their left hand knowing what their right hand was doing those who hid themselves did things before God in secret that the Lord will come and say you did all this and they will say I don't remember that when did I feed you when did I help you are you going to be in that number grow in wisdom let's have a right sense of values and you know the biggest way to backslide listen to me young people the biggest way for you to be backslide you can be a whole hearted Christian at the end of this youth conference and you can become a backslider by looking at the other young people in CFC who are not as gripped as you are you can follow their dress styles because they can do it I can do it they're considered to be some of the spiritual ones why do you want to do that why don't you

follow what Jesus has shown you I remember what the Lord told me when I was a young man look only at me don't look at people around you don't follow their example don't criticize them look at me and follow me let's pray there are a lot of things we heard the important thing is not whether you remember everything you heard but what is the response of your heart to Jesus it doesn't matter if you forget everything you heard that your mind is doesn't have a good memory doesn't matter but the Lord looks for the response of your heart to what you have heard that'll make you a man and a woman of God or it'll make you a person who's increased in knowledge you have a choice didn't you have a man of God a woman of God even if you don't have the ability to speak and share and things like that

Heavenly Father help us all because we're needy pray in Jesus name Amen.

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