

Father, we thank You, Father, for this evening. Yes, Lord, You have heard our worship this evening. Lord, we pray that You would have Your way in our lives. Your way. Teach us Your ways. Show us Your paths. You said Father, that Your thoughts are not our thoughts; Your ways are not our ways. Lord, teach us Your ways, therefore. We pray along with Moses, as he said, "Lord, if we found favor in Your sight," we humble ourselves before Thee so that we can see Your grace, that we could see Your way; Your path, the ancient paths that You have already designed for every one of us to walk in. I pray, Father, that You would show us Your ways, teach us Your paths and give us a willingness and the grace to obey. Not just to hear Your Word. I commit this time into Your hands. I pray Lord, that You would anoint each one of us, as I speak and even as all of us hear. Anoint us so that we can hear Your Word and learn from You and learn Your ways, and walk in them. Thank You Lord, we praise You, we worship You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Today's message is kind of a corollary, if you will, of the last Sunday's message. And I'm sure many of us are still reeling under the impact of what we have heard on Sunday. Well, if God, in His wisdom has allowed that message to be preached after 8 years in Grace Tabernacle (for me), had it been in 2008, I would have looked at my wife and said, "See what Pastor James said?" but after almost 9 years of marriage, I have become a little less foolish. After the message was over, I never even spoke a single word to my wife about the message (God is my witness). We just looked at each other. That's all. So, there was a lot of wireless communication that was going on. But one of the things that I have learnt, though, is that when we come to Church, we can easily miss the point – when we come to Church, the message is not for any gender; it is for all of us and that is also one of the wisdom that I have acquired over several years – it is not for one particular person, it is for all of us. The way we respond to the Word of God is so very important.

If you look at the title of Sunday's sermon, it is – Woman, Thou Art Loosed! That is the title of the message. So, since this is a corollary of last Sunday's message, I want to title this message as – 'Loosed or Loose?' What I mean by that is – if you thought that it was only for the women, then the women are loosed and you are loose. And that is the reason why Jesus said, *Mark 4:24*, be careful as to what you hear.

Mark 4:24

²⁴ Then He said to them, "Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given."

Luke 8:18

¹⁸ Therefore take heed how you hear...

Both – what you hear and how you hear. In Hindi, it is even more beautiful – Chaoukas raho kesey suntheho (be watchful how you hear). Chaoukas raho kya suntheho (be watchful what you hear). Chaoukas, here, is literally like Chaoukidari (being watchful like a watchman), guard as to what you hear. Otherwise, many people will be loosed and we will just remain the same and be deceived into thinking that we have been delivered, when we are not.

So, just to put this message into context from the title of last Sunday's message, I was just looking at this passage from *Luke 13*, where this is mentioned.

Luke 13:10-17

¹⁰ And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. ¹¹ And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. ¹² And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. ¹³ And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

You know, when I was growing up, I had a friend in my class, his name was Savio Bent. And the common joke the Math teacher use to crack was, "Savio Bent, I will make you straight." And the fact of the matter is that we are all bent in some area of the other. Bent, meaning – our ways are crooked; we are all crooked in our ways. And therefore, it is very important

Loosed or Loose?

that you see these two things over here – there is always teaching and then, if you understand the teaching and really apply it into your own life, there is a loosening from your infirmity; there is deliverance. There is a direct correlation between the two; between teaching and deliverance. Do you understand what I am saying?

So, this message is actually from what I learnt from last Sunday's sermon; it is from the conviction of my own heart; what God has spoken to my heart and that is what I am sharing with you. So, it has got nothing to do with anyone of you; it is my own personal conviction.

So, teaching and deliverance are related, absolutely. You cannot have deliverance without teaching. What happens in many places is that you have deliverance without teaching and so, what happens? The state of that person is worse than before because one demon is out and now, seven demons are in. You've driven out one demon; you have driven out one lie, and you have not filled yourself with the teaching of the Word of God and therefore, what has happened is that one demon has gone out and the house is nicely cleaned and swept. The demon sees it and say, "Boy! I want to go back to my house." He comes back to the house with seven more demons more evil than himself and the final state is worse than before.

So, the best way, therefore, to get delivered is to literally take the Word of God and push out the lies from your heart. Imagine that, if you have a stack of lies and you want to just push them out systematically. Take a bunch of books (on the Truth) and just push the lies out of your heart. And that is exactly what teaching (of the Word of God) does. So, how do you do it? You hear the teaching, accept it and then, there is deliverance. And therefore, Paul tells Timothy in *1 Timothy 4:16*. He says,

1 Timothy 4:16

¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching....

Do you see that? Very important.

1 Timothy 4:16

¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both (who?) yourself and your hearers.

It's very important for us. Be very careful on what you hear, how you hear, what kind of a teaching you are subscribing to and I'm telling you, boy! In Christendom, the shallowness of teaching, (Unbelievable,) where people come to hear a good message and don't change. In Christendom, "Boy, that was a good Message, brother. Very nice message. Very good Word." What has that done to you, though? Has it changed you? Has it delivered you? So, therefore, this is very important for us to keep a close watch on ourselves, first, and on our teaching.

Persist – very important. Persisting. I'll tell you the difference between an overcomer and a loser – the one who doesn't overcome is persistence. Ray Comfort makes a beautiful statement. Think about it. He says, "I'm an Evangelist and therefore, I have a lot of people whom I evangelize and I have a lot of fruit in my ministry. And you come and tell me, 'boy, you have a gift' and I'll look at you and laugh. Do you know why I'll laugh?" He says, "Think about this – a guy who is running a twenty kilometre marathon in the Olympics and then, after the end of the race, several people drop down. Some people even collapse during that race because it's a test of endurance and one guy comes to the finish line and he gets the first place. And then, you go to him and say, 'Hey, boy, you are gifted.' He will look at you and laugh. You know what he will say? 'What do you mean 'gifted'? Do you see these calf muscles of mine? Do you see them? Do you think I have got them just overnight because I had a gift? Do you see this abdomen of mine? Do you see this structure of mine? Do you think I got them overnight because I had a gift? You are a foolish man. I've worked for it. I've persisted consistently, over a period of time and this is exactly what I got and what you see is a result of intense amount of training and not just a gift." One of the things I have seen is that many people fall away because they have not learnt to persist. And if you are intelligent, do you know what one of the things intelligent people are? They are lazy at the same time because they get things done very easily. But they don't learn ethics of work. They don't persist. And that's possibly a difference between a genius and a guy who is just mediocre. A genius is a guy who is 99% persistence. Persist, my dear brothers and sisters, persist. It's not a gift. That is the reason why Paul will tell Timothy, "*Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*" Persistence is very important.

Secondly, the same Paul in Acts 20:28-30, He says,

Acts 20:28-30

²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

So, it's a warning to all of us – persistence is the key. And therefore, there's a direct correlation between teaching and deliverance. I believe that's the best way to get delivered – it is to succumb to teaching, which we will talk about today in more detail. There's a very interesting example in the *Book of Acts* where Paul is teaching in Lystra. There's this one guy. Look at what it says.

Acts 14:8-10

⁸ Now at Lystra there was a man sitting (look at what it says, the order) *who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked.* ⁹ He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith...

You see? *Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.* You have received the Word of God; faith has increased and then, he said,

...he had faith to be made well, ¹⁰ said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking.

Do you see that? Listen to the Word; let faith arise in your hearts and what does it say? Deliverance takes place. And you know what? You don't have to obey the entire commandments; you just have to obey one and everything else will make sense. What did I say? You just have to obey one command; every other command will make sense. What are you talking about, Vijay? See, it's not a converse of James when he says, "If you disobey one law, you have broken the whole law." But it is related to it in one sense. Do you know what it says in *John's Gospel 10*? This is a really powerful verse. It's the 7-1-7 rule. It's in *Mark 4:24*; *Luke 8:18* and *John 7:17*, okay? These three verses go together. This is very interesting. Jesus is saying in *John's Gospel 7:16-17*, this is what He says.

John 7:16-17

¹⁶ So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. ¹⁷ If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or (from man).

You know what? Pastor Sundar Krishnan gives this very interesting example. There is this girl who comes to his Church. She doesn't believe. She has got a lot of questions about Christianity. So, she hears his message consistently over a period of time and she comes to him and she says, "You know what? I've got so many questions. I still cannot experience God." Pastor Sundar Krishnan gives her a very interesting suggestion. He says, "You do one thing. You read the Gospels, right? Read through the Gospels and the Epistles; you've heard my teaching. Just obey one commandment that Jesus taught you. Just obey one and see what will happen." So, she says, "Let me try this out." The next day, she's gone to the library and she is standing in the line to take the books from the librarian. Even as she is standing in the line, there's one girl who just comes by her, shoots past the line and then, goes ahead. And she said, "If it were my previous person, I would have said, 'madam, stop. Come back'." So, immediately, she said, "Okay, fine. I heard Sundar's teaching – consider others more important than you. So let me just obey." She said, "You know what? The moment I obeyed that one Commandment, everything else Jesus taught made sense." See, you know why this is important? This word 'know' in Greek actually means the experiential knowledge of truth. This is not just head knowledge. It's very beautiful in Telugu. It says, 'satyamu burchina anubhavanyanu'. What does it mean? The experiential knowledge of truth that you learn the truth and you apply it in your own lives. And because that is related to a Person, you understand the things about the Person. That's a remarkable thing. That's *ginosko*. It is used 223 times in the Greek New Testament and every time it is used, it's used in the context of experiential knowledge. Got it? And therefore, there were these set of people who never experienced God, you see? In *Hebrews 4:1-2*,

Hebrews 4:1-2

¹ ***Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.***
² ***For unto us was the gospel preached (you see that word 'preach'?), as well as unto them: (This is talking about the Israelites) but the word preached did not profit (why?) them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.***

You see? They heard the teaching but it did not produce the faith in them and therefore, you see. If you look at the life of the Israelites, forty years of rebellion. Not even a single day, they said, "God, sorry." And therefore, brothers and sisters, there's an incredible relationship teaching and being loosed from our infirmity.

See, when I heard last Sunday's Message, I was like, "Boy! God's teaching is so radical, isn't it? Absolutely contradictory to the standards and the patterns of this world." Absolutely. How we think of how things should work in the world is completely the opposite in God's Kingdom. And one of the things that was so powerful, the Commands are always given to the weaker person. And if you want to reign with God, you should be proven as the weaker person and obey everything that God has commanded. And Jesus, literally, personified that lifestyle. When Jesus was dying, when He was at the Garden of Gethsemane, He was praying, "***LORD, not My will but Yours be done. Let this cup be passed from Me but not My will; Yours be done.***" You know what He could have said? He could have said, "LORD, this is not fair. This is unfair. You are allowing Me, who have never sinned in thought, in action, in deed, has never said one thing; I have always loved and given to people; and You are saying, LORD, that You should allow Me to be killed by these unjust people. LORD, this is not right; this is not fair." You know what? He would have been absolutely just in saying that; nobody could have argued with Him. But do you know what He did? "***Not My will but Yours be done.***"

So, this is a very interesting thing. Jesus Himself was a disciple. "***Morning by morning, He awakens Me to hear so that I can give My back to those who harm Me.***" Can you imagine that? That is how He says in *Isaiah 50*. "I heard from God, morning by morning. I learnt from Him so that, one day, I could give My back to those people who harmed Me." Powerful. So, this evening, just keep that in your mind.

You need to understand – God is not a God who frowns at us. We'll come to that point. Look at the same passage in *Luke's Gospel 13*.

Luke 13:14-17

¹⁴ ***But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, (Look at that! There are religious people all over the place.) said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day."*** ⁵ ***Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites (you loose fellow)! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham (boy! Look at the perspective from Heaven!) whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.***

You see that? There's always opposition. First thing that I learnt, therefore, teaching and deliverance are connected. The second thing that I learnt, His teaching is hard but God is not. See, He said that, "***Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood, you will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and you cannot be My disciple.***" And everybody said, "***This is too hard! Who can obey this teaching?***" But you see, that is the reason why when we sin, we think that God is going to spank us; He is going to do everything against us. But do you know how God looks at it? He says in *Romans 3:23*. You know what He says? "***All have sinned and (what?) fallen short of the glory that comes from God.***" That is how He looks at it. But we look at it and say, "Lord, You are a hard Man!" Now, this is how Aaron was taught to bless the children of Israel. Now, think about it. What you think God to be will exactly be the person you are because you will become like the idol you worship; that's what *Psalms* will say. And if there are so many people who are hard in the Kingdom of God, that means they have a hard God. That's exactly whom they worship and I'm exactly one of them. Don't think I'm teaching because I have arrived. No. That's exactly what I used to think – spank! But God is hard, yes, but He is our Father. Look at how He asks Aaron to bless the children of Israel. This is *Numbers 6:22-27*,

Numbers 6:22-26

²² *The LORD spoke to Moses...*

One thing you learn, Aaron could not be directly spoken to. So, LORD said, "That fellow could not hear. You tell him." And the High Priest is exactly the representation of the people. What did the people say? "Oh, we heard the Ten Commandments. That is enough. We don't want to hear this God." You know what they said? "We've learnt that we can hear from God and live." But in the very next verse, they said, "We don't want to hear from God and die. We learnt that man can hear from God and live," but the very next verse, "we don't want to hear from God and die. So, Moses, you go and speak to us." That is high priest Aaron for you.

...saying, ²³ "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them...

Look at this. This is before the children of Israel in *Numbers 14* against God. No, this is even before that. This is how God looks at Israel, even before Balaam could curse Israel. This is how God looks at them. Look at what He says,

²⁴ The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

That's exactly how we end every Service, with a benediction. "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit..." because the mind of the Spirit is peace (*Romans 8:6*). "Let the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest upon you." "Even though the Word is hard, I am a Father." In *Zephaniah 3:14*, He says, "I'll rejoice over you with singing." Can you imagine? There's a woman who had a baby after fifteen years! Think about it. Fifteen years, like Hannah. She had a baby after so many years of praying and one day, she looked at Samuel. What would have been her reaction? "Oh boy! What a baby!" Like how Hrishi looks at Nathanael. "Anna, it's amazing." That's exactly how he is rejoicing over the baby. And that's exactly what God says, "You are engraved in the palms of My hands. You are like the apple of My eye." You see? And therefore, even Jesus will tell His disciples, "I love you. How much do I love you? Just like the Father loves Me, I love you." You know, even the Father loves you. How much does the Father love us? "As much as He has loved Me, He loves you." And still, they will doubt. "Do You love me, Lord?" It's amazing, right?

John 17:17, 19

¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

He loves us so much! Most of us don't understand God like that. We don't understand God like that. We all try to perform. "Lord, did You see this, Lord?" God says, "Baba, you are accepted in the beloved!" But there's a difference, of course, in getting accepted and earning God's trust. But I'm not going there, though. But I'm saying one thing – God loves us. God is not a hard God.

Look at one of the servants. This is one of the wicked servants. Jesus comes and gives everybody how many pounds? He calls ten servants and gives them ten pounds. Now, do the math. Ten servants, ten pounds. How many per servants? One per servant. Very simple. We are all learning arithmetic.

Luke 19:20-23

²⁰ Then another (servant) came, (this is the third fellow) saying, 'Lord, here is your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief; ²¹ for I was afraid of you, because you are a severe man. You take what you did not deposit...

"But I already put in one pound, right?" See, that's exactly what people don't realize. They don't see what they have. It's a remarkable thing! I see that even in Christendom, brothers complaining over things that they do not possess. See?

²¹ For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' ²² And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you...

"See, you said that I was a hard man, right? You made an idol out of your own imaginations. That's exactly how I'm going to deal with you now." And he calls him,

...you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow.²³ Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?

Do you think God is hard? This is New Covenant. Do you know what David has to say in *Psalms 103* about God? This is a guy in the Old Covenant. This is what he says about God.

Psalms 103:10-13

¹⁰He has not dealt with us according to our sins (brothers. No), Nor punished us according to our iniquities. (Then, he tells in another Psalm, "Lord, if You would mark our iniquities, who can stand before You? But there is mercy that You may be feared.") ¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; ¹²As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. (How?) ¹³As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

Therefore, do you know what is one of the things that I learnt last Sunday? That His teaching is hard but He is not. And you know what He says? *"You obey My teaching and you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free. You will experience Me at a different level altogether."*

There's another who said in *Genesis 4:13*,

Genesis 4:13

¹³Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment (iniquity) is greater than I can bear.

"You are a hard God." His teaching is hard but God is not. Therefore, He says,

Romans 2:4-5

⁴Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? ⁵But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

He is a God who is not hard. Therefore, He says, *"As a Father chastens His children, so I chasten you."* Why? "Because I want you to be partakers of My righteousness and My holiness. I'm a Father."

Third lesson which I learnt – God is not partial. What does it mean? We'll elaborate this a little more. This is one of the things that I've learnt in my life and this is my own principle. This is something which spoke to my heart, my principle, my conviction – a verse that liberated me from a lot of trouble. I'll tell you what it liberated me from. *Genesis 4:6-7*, this is God telling Cain.

Genesis 4:6-7

⁶The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted?...

You know, it's a rhetorical question. So, let us find out the answer for the question. You tell me, "If I do well, I will be accepted." You know what it means? Do you know how much this verse has saved me from thoughts of envy, thoughts of jealousy and the spirit of competition? And it continues to save me from jealousy, from envy and from a spirit of competition. You might look at me and ask, "Vijay, you have envy, jealousy and the spirit of competition?" If I say 'no', then I'm lying. Do you know what I would be saying, then? "My flesh is better than your flesh." In my flesh, nothing good is there. I have learnt this in my life and every time I have a thought of envy, do you know what I say? *"Lord, if I do well, I will be accepted."* Immediately, it will liberate me from the spirit of anxiety, spirit of jealousy, spirit of envy and a sense of competition. You know why? That is exactly how I've been taught from the beginning. "Compete! Vadu kanna yekuva marks raakududu neeku (he shouldn't get more marks than you). Compete!" My mother was very tough those days. She used to say, "You memorize this and I am going to ask you." She was so tough, she asked me to do everything verbatim. So, even if I would paraphrase anything, she would chuck the book on my face and say, "Go, learn and come back again." So, that is how I learnt everything – verbatim. And I was so angry at the end of my 10th class exam. I'll tell you why. Because I learnt the

entire Social Studies textbook by-heart. And how much did I get? 67. You know what? That had become the biggest stumbling block for me. That fellow would have seen my answers, “Arrey, veedu copy kotedu (this guy must have copied).” I’m not kidding. You can ask my mother. Science textbook – by-heart. Social Studies textbook – by-heart. Verbatim. That is how I learnt. I had a sense of competition. That’s exactly how it is in this world – compete! Do you know what God says? “Take it easy, brother. You are not competing with anybody else. If you do well, you will be accepted.” But I thank God for that also. It has helped me a lot in memorizing Scripture later on in my life. Verbatim. That’s exactly how I am with my children also. My wife asks me to teach them one lesson, they are gone. Finished! “You should know this. You didn’t get it! Say that again until you get it.” I’ll tell you one thing, though. *If you do well, you will be accepted.*

Another thing; another liberating verse that comes to my mind all the time. Whenever you have a sense of competition, you should remember John the Baptist. Whom should you remember? John the Baptist. Everybody say, “Whenever I have a sense of competition, I will remember John the Baptist.” What happened? They had an issue with baptizing and everybody came to John the Baptist, “Rabbi, you know that Person, Jesus, the Johnny come lately? Everybody is running to Him! More people are getting baptized there!” Do you know what John said? “You know what? I’ve killed the sense of competition in my heart. *A man should receive nothing except it be given from His Father in Heaven.* Nothing.” In other words, if you receive something which is not God’s will in your life, it will destroy you. Boy, it liberated me. Liberation of the millennium! *You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free*, especially in this competitive generation. Everybody is envious and jealous. They don’t care about ethics; they want a promotion. And even if you deserve a promotion, they will not give you the promotion just because they are envious of you. You read the entire Gospels, you know what happens? The religious class – Pilate understands that they want to put Jesus to death because of, what? Of envy. You think that it stops there. You read the entire *Book of the Acts of the Apostles*; every time the Jewish people, they want to kill Apostle Paul. You know why they wanted to kill him? Because of envy. The mark of a religious spirit is envy and a sense of competition. So, you want liberation from the sense of competition? Nice verse, right? Liberation from a sense of competition. I like rhymes. So, what do you say? Liberation from a sense of competition is possible because if I do well, I will be accepted. But, look at what it says? Does it stop there? No.

...And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door (what is crouching at the door?). Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it.

Notice the pronouns, brothers. I’ve learnt a little bit of English. Pronouns. Its, it – got it? It’s a pronoun. Every other translation, you use that, including the NKJV. But there’s another translation, we call the ‘Holier-Than-Thou Translation’. That’s what we call as the KJV translation. Look at what it is written there. This is interesting. This is only rendered in KJV this way. Look at what He says,

Genesis 4:6-7

⁶And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? ⁷If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Look at this! All other translations were ‘*its desire; rule over it*’. The Holier-Than-Thou translation will say, ‘*his desire; rule over him*’. It’s interesting. Very interesting. The word ‘his desire’ comes from the Hebrew word ‘teshuqah’. How many times is it used? Only three times in the entire Old Testament. Three times. Three times in the entire Old Testament and out of that, once this time. Two other times – *Genesis 3:16*. One of the 3:16s we can remember. Not just *John 3:16*; *Genesis 3:16*. Look at what it says in *Genesis 3:16*,

Genesis 3:16

¹⁶Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire (do you see that? Teshuqah, again. That’s the word) shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

Song of Solomon 7:10

¹⁰I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.

Loosed or Loose?

Same word. So, what does it mean? Sin is just not an 'it'; it's a person. Therefore, Jesus will teach His disciples, "*Lead me not into temptation but deliver me from the evil one.*" Because evil has a face. I am telling you, brothers and sisters, this is the most important thing for us to understand. Do you know why Jesus said, "*When I come into the world, the Holy Spirit comes into the world, He will convict the world of (what?) sin (why? Why sin?) of righteousness and of judgment.*" And when He talks about judgment, He says, "Of judgment, because the prince of this world has been judged." And every time you see sin, there is a person lurking behind that sin. It is no longer just an 'it'; it's a person. "*Deliver me from the evil one.*" So, why do we need to have this teaching, though? Why do we need to have this teaching?

The next lesson I learnt – obedience to His teaching makes me overcome sin and therefore, the devil. What did Jesus say in Gospel according *John 14:30*? He says,

John 14:30

³⁰ ***...for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.***

Teaching of the Word of God. *Romans 6:17-19*, this is what he says. Paul will tell the Church of Rome. He says,

Romans 6:17-19

¹⁷ ***But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching...***

And you know, it's very interesting when you read your Bible in your local language. I've started to read the Bible in the foreign language, my own mother tongue. By the way, it's called 'Telugu'. Do you know what it says in Telugu, the standard of teaching? The word in Telugu is 'Upadesakramamu'. So, for people who do not understand Telugu, some subtitles are like this – Upadesamu means 'teaching'. Kramamu means 'order'. Upadesakramamu – an order or pattern of teaching. And you know what Paul is telling the saints in Rome? He says, "You have become obedient from the heart to that order of teaching that has been submitted to you so that you can be kept from, what?" You were once slave of sin set free from sin. Do you want to overcome sin? It is not going to happen overnight. Do you know what Moses tells in the *Book of Deuteronomy 7*? He says, you have the Hivites; you have the Gergashites; you have the Perezites and this 'ites' and that sites, seven nations stronger than you, first. And if you want to drive out these nations? How will you do that? Little by little, so that the wild beast will not take over. See, you need to understand. This is a persistent walk and he says, "You have to consistently come and surrender yourself and submit yourself to that standard of teaching." Why? Look at what he says.

¹⁸ ***and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.*** ¹⁹ ***I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness...***

You know what the word in Telugu is? Upadesakramamu. Lawlessness is akramamu. What does akramamu means? That which is anti-order. Anti-type pattern. And that is the reason why we have this nice Transcript in Telugu called Paapamu, athikramamu, अपाधमामु (sin, iniquity and transgression). What is athikramamu (iniquity) or akramamu (lawlessness) is essentially a pattern which is against the pattern of the teaching of God. And that is the reason why, if you look at what was taught on Sunday, one of the things you will see – what is the pattern?

Genesis 2:24

²⁴ ***Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.***

That is upadesakramamu (God's order). What is athikramamu (iniquity)? First, become one. Then, don't stay with each other; forget about father and mother. You see? And then, we have all these jokes on marriage. And therefore, Jesus says, "*Marriage is honorable among all.*" Among all, marriage is the most honorable;

Hebrews 13:4

⁴ ***Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: (Among all, marriage is the most honorable) but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.***

Loosed or Loose?

Why? “Because they have gone against My plan.” See, this is very important for us to understand, my dear brothers and sisters. There is a pattern of teaching that is being established systematically. And many people are not persistent in succumbing to teaching. They will say, “This is too much for me. Stop!” So, why did God even write all these Epistles? You know why God wrote all these Epistles?

1 John 2:1

¹ My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin...

Why are we teaching you all this? So that you will not sin. Why are we spending so much of time and hours of teaching? So that you will not sin. Do you see that? The whole objective of teaching is to ensure you do not sin. But if you sin... a lot of people are like that and therefore, they remain as, what? Little children. They will sin. “Jesus, forgive me.” Next day, they will go, sin and “Jesus, forgive me.” Sin, forgive. Forever and ever. Even in eternity, I don’t know what will happen first – sin or forgiveness. I don’t know. Look at what it says in 1 John 2, the same thing. We all like the second part.

...But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

God says, “Fore point is that you will not sin.” Look at what it says in 1 John 2:12-14,

1 John 2:12-14

¹² I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake. (I told you, right? Little children – sins are forgiven) ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one... (But how?) ...I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and (therefore) you have overcome the evil one.

The whole idea is that. What do we come to Church for? We learn the pattern and say, “Lord, I’ve established these patterns in my heart so that when temptation comes, I have the capacity to say ‘no’ because there are patterns that have been established in my heart. Do you know what? Initially, I might like those patterns and therefore, I might be falling into temptation but over a period of time, I will have Your mind; I will hate iniquity and I will love righteousness. And therefore, You will anoint me with the oil of gladness.” Did you understand?

Next verse. This is an Old Covenant believers. His name is David.

Psalms 19:7-13

⁷ ...the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;⁸ the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹ the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. ¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹ Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

All these appreciations so that,

¹² Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. ¹³ Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression.

I’m learning all of these so that I can be kept from sin. Look at this. Look at this guy. Another rhetorical question: *who can discern his errors?* Answer: no one can discern their errors. It’s simple. Think about it. I’m preaching. How much of my preaching is exalting of self? I don’t know. How much of this is to gain the approval of men? I don’t know. How much of it has hidden agendas? I don’t know and David says, “Jesus, please cleanse me from those hidden faults, which are even hidden from my own eyes.” And then, he says that the presumptuous sins are the dangerous ones. It’s like, “Catch my shirt and pull me back when I’m going to sin.” *Let them not have*, what? You know what he is praying? Paul said in Romans 6:14, “*Sin shall not have dominion over your life.*” A guy who is under the law. His teaching is so that we overcome sin.

Next thing that I learnt – His teaching is for all, irrespective of gender. Because the last time we said ‘*woman, thou art loosed*’, who is the woman over there? We look at our wives. No. If I am under the teaching, I’ll not look at my wife; I will look at myself. You know why? Because, spiritually speaking, I am also a woman. Do you have doubts? Okay, let man be a liar; let God be true. So,

2 Corinthians 11:1-3

¹ I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. (Please bear with me, even now as I’m speaking. Please,) ***Do bear with me!*** **² For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you** (who is that? The Corinthian Church) ***to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.*** **³ But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve...**

So, who is Eve over here, spiritually speaking? You and I. See, you need to understand – God’s teaching is for all. You know, one of the things that Paul, whenever he goes to different places, he uses the local context. He says, “Our own poets have said this.” What did he say? “Our own poets said that we are all God’s children. We are His offering.” And he uses the same connotation in *Ephesians 3*; Pastor was preaching on Sunday. He says, “All of us get our name from the Father.” You know what He says? In Telugu, it is very interesting – “Mee kavisvaralalo okkaru itla annadu” (Your own kavis (poets) have said this.)

One of the other foreign language that I was forced to learn in my growing-up days. One is Telugu and the other is Sanskrit. And that also, because my mother, she looked at my 10th class exam marks. Those days, there were only two colleges in the Twin Cities – One is LFJC and the other is Loyola Academy. So, if your marks are very low, your merit list is very low, you will not get Sanskrit. Not because Sanskrit is easy; Sanskrit is scoring. Because, unlike any other language, you can learn the slokas in Sanskrit and write the tatparyam (meaning) and saramsham (story in a glance) in English. So, my mother said, “Veedikī raadu seat. Veedikī Telugu vastadi. (He will not get the seat. He will get Telugu) Telugu and he is going to fail.” Somehow, by God’s grace and my mother’s prayers, I finally ended up learning Sanskrit. But of all the slokas that I learnt, there was only one sloka that I remember. Out of the hundreds of slokas that I had to by-heart in one year, I forgot most of them; in fact, all of them, except one sloka. Also, because of All India Radio and my mother. Nowadays, we don’t have All India Radio; we have Radio Mirchi 95.4 FM – chaala hot (very hot). But those days, it was All India Radio and my mother was having this incredible discipline of listening to the news and R.R. K. Murthy and Sanskritam. And there used to be one Sanskrit part which used to come every time on All India Radio. How many of you remember that? Old timers, you see? I’ve already become old. I’ve gone to the next generation now. And that is called the Keyurani Slokam. That is one slokam which I learnt because I was hearing the radio and not because I was learning Sanskrit. I learnt it while I was hearing the radio and I went to the Sanskrit class and I said, “Oh, this is what All India Radio used to play.” And that is the only slokam which remained in my life and I’ll tell you what the slokam is. Do you know what it says? Very interesting.

“keyūrāṇi na vibhūṣayanti puruṣaṁ hārā na candrojjvalāḥ
na snānaṁ na vilepanaṁ na kusumaṁ nālaṅkṛtā mūrdhajāḥ |
vāṇyēkā samalaṅkaroti puruṣaṁ yā saṁskṛtā dhāryate
kṣīyante khalu bhūṣaṇāni satataṁ vāgbhūṣaṇaṁ bhūṣaṇam ||”

This is the Sanskrit poem; not because of my class; because of All India Radio and my mother. And I went to the class and my teacher was explaining the meaning. Suddenly, my antenna rose up and I started learning the meaning of that. It’s remarkable that this ancient poet is going to describe what a true man. He is not going to describe a woman; he is going to describe a man. You know what he says?

““keyūrāṇi na vibhūṣayanti puruṣaṁ.” What is Keyurani? The ornaments to your biceps. Don’t decorate a man.

“hārā na candrojjvalāḥ ” Meaning – even a necklace which is having the brightness of the crescent moon. This is because, in those days, they used to wear a lot of hara (crescent moons).

Na snānaṁ – not taking bath

na vilepanaṁ – oil or scent

Loosed or Loose?

na kusumaṁ – powders, turmeric; or even flowers

nālaṅkṛtā mūrdhajāḥ – mūrdhajāḥ is your hair.

You see that? na snānaṁ na vilepanaṁ na kusumaṁ nālaṅkṛtā – don't decorate your hair

Vaani – what is vaani? Speech.

vāṇyekā – it is only the speech.

samalaṅkaroti puruṣaṁ - decides the character of a man.

yā saṁskṛtā dhāryate – and that speech depends upon the culture that he puts on.

kṣīyante khalu bhūṣaṇāni – That means, every other ornament will decay. Every other ornament. Look at the insight of this guy.

Vaakbhusanam – your speech, your conversation – that is the real ornament.

That is what a great Brahmin Sanskrit poet will say and our fishermen will say something else, similarly on the same lines. This is *1 Peter 3:1-4*. You see the connection?

1 Peter 3:1-4

¹ Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word...

What is that? Conversation; this is behavior but most behavior is determined by your conversation. 'Your conversation' is essentially old English which tells the behavior but primarily, it is your conversation, your speech because Jesus said, "What goes into a man does not decorate man; how comes out of a man decorates a man." What is He saying?

² While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. ³ Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair (mūrdhajāḥ), and of wearing of (ornaments) gold, or of putting on of apparel;

You should listen to some of our old poets. You should listen to the insight they have on the human psyche. The insight and the depth of the insight they had; they were thinkers – our own poets. Do you know what he says?

⁴ But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the (what?) ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.

Is this only for women? I'm telling you, this is for me. God looks at me whether I am meek and lowly in spirit and looks at me and says, "Vijay, baba, you are not." This not just for... the context, maybe, for women but it's for me too. Because Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth," and what was Moses? The meekest man in the sight of God. It's a great ornament. When the fire came on the Day of Pentecost, do you know what was fired up first? The speech was fired up. It was the speech. It's the speech, my dear brothers and sisters, which defines you. It defines you – what comes out of you when you, especially, go through trials, tribulations and circumstances and temptations. Who set the pattern?

1 Peter 2:22

²² "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth";

This is Jesus. So, what kind of Bride would He want?

Revelation 14:4-5

⁴These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.⁵ And (what?) in their mouth was found (what?) no guile...

Exactly like that. When I heard the message, I really, honestly, started applying it to my own heart first. I never looked at my wife. God is my witness. She is also my witness. I didn't look at my wife. I looked at myself and I said, "Lord, this is powerful. This is radical. This is completely contradictory to what the world will say. This is complete opposite." The world will say, "Fight for your rights." God will say, "Don't rebel authority because I have placed them over you. They are My messengers on My behalf." And your testimony will be defined as to how you respond. Do you see how much, in the last days, we have completely not been loosed? We are loose, actually, literally, because our minds are completely warped. Therefore, he says,

Philippians 2:5

⁵Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Romans 8:7

⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God;...

It cannot understand the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. Who can understand the mind of Christ? "But we have," he says, "the mind of Christ. We have." Let it be made manifest in your lives. We have the mind of Christ, saints. In the last days, I'm telling you, honestly, I feel mostly, our decisions in our lives, if they are not backed up by the Word of God that we hear, it doesn't matter how long you've been a believer; if it is not backed up the teaching that we hear, if it is not determined by what we have understood and we have obeyed, if your convictions are not formed based on God's teaching/pattern, you will not finish the race; you will give at one point and say, "This is too much. This is too hard a teaching. Who can bear it?" But you need to understand one thing – God is not hard. His teaching may be. He is hard because that defines His personality, His character. His character is, what? He is absolutely righteous; He is absolutely holy; He is absolutely merciful and they are all not mutually exclusive; they are altogether – He is merciful; He is also just. He is holy; He is also loving at the same time. And therefore, He says, "*Be holy as I am holy.*" But He is a Father. He wants all of us to be overcomers; not just one or two; all of us. And I want to finish as an overcomer. And I say, "Lord, I don't know. So many times, I don't understand. But I'm just going to submit." So many times, I don't understand and I say, "This is too much, Lord. I don't want to do this." There is always this thought, "I don't want to do this, Lord." There is a fight. I will be honest with you – there are so many times I fought with the Lord. I said, "No, Lord. Not this." But the moment I started surrendering, I made sense of what the heart of God is. Amen? These last days will be defined by a set of people who will say, "Lord, it doesn't matter. I don't have to understand everything that You say but I know Who said it. It is You." Shall we pray, this evening?

Closing Prayer:

Father, You love us, Lord. You are not a hard taskmaster. You teach us tough things because You treat us as Your children. You chastise us and You rebuke us because You want us to be made partakers of Your holiness. You ask us to suffer in our obedience so that we can reign with You one day. Father, let us look at the big picture. Father, let us just embrace the truth. Let us not be like those people who will not obey the truth because they don't love it and for this cause, You sent them a delusion. Father, we want to finish our race. We want to end up as overcomers. We want to be delivered to declare Your goodness in our lives. Father, enable us, in these last days, not to compromise on little things. Even if something is hard and tough, enable us to embrace it because it comes from You. Father, never let us forget that even while we were yet sinners, You died for us. When we were Your enemies, You came and saved us. When we were without God and without strength, You loved us. And therefore, You said in Your Word that we love You; not because we have initiated it; it is because You first loved us and called us Your friends. This evening, Father, I pray, Lord, that we will have an open mind that when we hear the Word, we will not fight with it. We might have questions but Lord, we will not argue. We will submit. If the Word is true, Lord, let it be said about us like the Church at Thessalonica that when they received the Word, they did not receive it as the word of men but as it was – in truth, the Word of God. It will have the power to work in us because we believe. Enable us to believe, Lord. We thank You; we praise You. We give You glory, honor and praise. In Jesus' Mighty Name we pray, Amen.