

Your Sin Will Find You Out!

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Father, we thank You. Yes, Lord; we confess our need this evening. Without You, we fall apart. You are the One who guides our hearts. You are the One who understands. You are our righteousness. You are our shield. You are our exceedingly great reward. It is You we adore. It is You we desire. Father, as the Psalmist said, "Nothing our desire compares to you; whom have we have in earth but You? Oh Lord, there is nothing on earth we desire apart from You." O Lord, this evening, pour Your love into our hearts that we will love You with all of our heart and we will love one another more. Father, enable us to experience the love of our Father even as we mediate upon Your Word. Enable us to know that it is the Father speaking to their children because You want us to reign with You one day. And Lord, every son You whom You receive, You discipline so that we maybe a partaker of Your holiness and of Your righteousness. Therefore, this evening, O Lord, even as we mediate upon Your Word that You would bless the mediation of this Word, O Lord; that You would anoint us in our speaking and our hearing and, Lord, let every distraction flee. I bind every spirit of distraction and every spirit of tiredness that is trying to take attention of God's people away from Your Word, Father. we bind it in the Name of Jesus and we release ourselves for the glory of God. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

I was mediating upon God's Word and we will continue to mediate. There is one parable of the fig tree which is mentioned in all the four Gospels. The fig tree is mentioned, I was looking at and in line of what we've been studying over several weeks in our Church and we'll continue to look at that this evening.

Mark 11:12-14

¹² Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. ¹³ And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.

Of course, we understand that the parable in some measure, we know that fig tree symbolizes the people of Israel the people of God. Symbolically, it represents us as well, and one of the things God wants to look and see in our lives, is the bearing of fruit. See, God is an investor, and when He gives something inside, He expects something out. That is the reason He says, "To whom much will be given, much will be required." Our God is a God who expects fruit. And you know the parable, of course, and He comes and sees the fig tree and it is not the season of figs, of course, the spiritual application of this, if you heard messages from Pastor James also preached about this some time back. He says, "For a Christian, for a believer, there is no season for fruit; you have to bear fruit, all season for fruit." You have to bear fruit all season, for spiritual season, there is no fruit. There is no season for love, there is no season for patience, there is no season for self-control. Every part of the year, you are expected to bear fruit of the spirit but it's interesting that the parable of the fig tree is mentioned in all three Gospels and you'll look at this each of this Gospels, you get a different paradigm; you get different understanding of what God is expecting as fruit. You'll find this again in *Luke's 13*. One of the very controversial chapters in the Bible.

Luke 13:6-9

⁶ He also spoke this parable: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷ Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' (He is saying come on take it off, cut it off)⁸ But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. ⁹ And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.' "

Now, when you look at this parable in isolation, you may not get what exactly the fruit that God is expecting. One of the things; the way to study Scripture is what we call is – method of concentric circles; you study Scripture in its context. So, look at the verse and if you want to understand the verse in its context, you look at the previous verse and the verse following it and you'll get an idea of what He is expecting. If you don't get the idea, increase the radius of the circle even as you go through the Bible. So, you understand the complete context in which the particular verse is been spoke. So, if you

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want to look at the context its very interest the context is fantastic very controversial in that sense, if you look at what happens in *Luke 13:1* onwards. This is in the context in which the parable is been spoken.

Luke 13:1-5

¹ *There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.* ² *And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?"* (Question is, some Jews got apparently got martyred or were killed by Pilot, they were worse sinners than you guys and other Galileans there. Now, He says,) ³ *I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.* ⁴ *Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem?* ⁵ *I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."*

It's very interesting that He calls them offenders here and He calls them sinners there. Offenders in Jerusalem, sinners in Galilee. The two different words in Greek sinner in Galilee means people who miss the mark of God, from where we get the word "Hamartia". Offenders are those people who owe a debt to God which they cannot fulfil. They have offended God, and they owe a debt to God. And He is asking the question, "Do you think these guys who are in Jerusalem are worse offenders than all the people in Jerusalem?" And He is saying, "No, if *unless you repent you, you will likewise perish.*" And then, He told this parable – "A man had a fig tree..." You understand the context now? The context is – He is telling two incidences that have happened. When you see first record, these precise incidences that have happened in Church history. One was martyrdom and the other was accident. And He is asking the question, some people are not martyred, murdered, it's not martyrdom; it's murder. Some people were murdered, and some people died because of an accident. And the question He is asking them, "What you think is the reason for their death?"

You know, one of the most common, if I were to ask a survey, you were asked, what are the different ways people die? Old-age, natural disasters, famine, sickness, accidents, these are various ways in which people die. Those are the methodologies in which people die but the question is: why do they die? Accidents, I mean, it's interesting; therefore, He is giving two incidences over here. He is saying – one was murder; the other was accident; and He is giving the same reason as to why these people died and they died because of sin. It's amazing. And in that context, He is posing the parable. You got that? I am just making few observations here, people may die various ways, but there is only one reason as to why they die and that is because of sin.

Romans 3:23

²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Romans 6:23

²³ *For the wages of sin is death...*

You know this is the most contested verse in the Bible. It doesn't matter which background you come from, like Pastor was talking about last Wednesday, you can have an atheist, you can have a religious person, you can have a Christian person, what is common to all of them? Death. You know, let me just read this controversial verse before I go. Look at this verse this is *Romans 5:12-14*. Look at this verse, this is the analysis, this is a proposition if you will. This is, a kind of a theorem, an axiom. You know few people study axioms in mathematics right. It's an axiom over here. He is trying to say,

Romans 5:12-14

¹² *Therefore, as sin came into the world, (through how many men?) through one man,*

Sin came into the world and what came because of sin? Death came because of sin. That is the reason why people, people die because of sin. So, death spread to all men; why? Because they all sinned. And then, you know what? Does he put a full stop over there? No; He puts a hyphen, He puts a semicolon and He says, "I know you guys are going to contest this like crazy. Your minds travelling with such speed and you are going to rebel against this and you are not going not accept this. Therefore, let Me give you empirical proof, data." This is important, you see. If you study mathematics, not a mathematician, I understand this in different ways; there is something called proof using mathematical induction? How many of you know mathematical induction? Guys, you studied it; don't be ashamed of it. You know what mathematical

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induction is? If you say, let's say, you have a proposition; you have a left-hand side and you have a right-hand side. You want to prove left-hand side is equal to right-hand side or not equal to right-hand side. How do you prove it? The way to prove it is, take all possible data and see if this particular equation is satisfied with every possible data. And if it is satisfied by every possible data, then that statement is true. Even if one data point does not satisfy the equation, then it is false. That is what you call it is a counter example. Give me one counter example; I can prove it wrong; what we call in mathematics, "reductio ad absurdum". So, you go with a proposition and you end up with a contraction, then you say, "I am taking a proposition; I am ending up with a contraction and therefore, my proposition is false." And I see you thought you don't need mathematics but for the Bible, you need.

I'll tell you why I get excited because of this, you know there was one preacher who said, "If Paul were to be a computer scientist, he would have been one of the best computer scientist in the world. In fact, he would have been number one influential people in Forbes list." He is brilliant. He is exploiting, and he says, "You have a problem." Here, he is saying, "I know you guys will contest this because I made a fantastic statement – 'one man sin he died death came to all men because all sinned', and you'll say 'no'. How can you say that?" Then he says, "Hold on. I put a semicolon. I didn't put a period." Then, he says,

⁴⁴for sin in deed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. However, death reigned from Adam till law givers Moses, even over those people who did not sin in the likeness of the transgression of Adam who is the type of the one to come.'

Meaning – there were so many people who died before the law came and why do you think they died? Because they sinned. You know how many religions contest this? The doctrine of original sin. There is only one reason as to why people, they may die in several ways, but there is only one reason they die – it is because of sin. I did not say that; Paul said it, and if you have a problem, if you reach there on the other side, content with him. So, that is the only reason for death. And it is so devastating; the sin is that one man sinned and the whole world died. That is incredible. When Paul makes this fantastic statement, "*What can separate us, if God be for us, who can be against us? But when is God for us? Only when we have been clothed with the righteousness of Jesus, right? Otherwise, He is not with us. And then, he says, "If you have been clothed with the righteousness of Jesus can famine, can nakedness, can peril can destruction can anything separate you from the love of Christ?"* No. Those things; your circumstances will not separate you from the love of Christ, but sin will. That will. So, unless you repent, therefore, you'll never be able to enter life. So, remember the context in which the parable has been positioned. Reason for death is because of sin and then He possess the parable and then, He says, "*And this man came and is looking for fruit what is the fruit He is looking for?"* Seeing sin but before we go there, we'll look at some definitions of sin in the Bible,

1 John 3:3-5

³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself as He is pure. ⁴Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; (indeed) sin is lawlessness. (or transgression of the law which we call as sin of commission.) ⁵You know that He appeared in order to take away sins, and in Him there is no sin.

So, sin is lawlessness. The first definition of sin the Bible.

Second definition of sin.

James 4:17

¹⁷Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, (What is it? Sin) to him it is sin.

What we call sin of commission. And for believers even more deadly.

Romans 14:23

³But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

Another analysis. Look at Old Testament.

Ezekiel 18:21-24

²¹ ***“But if a wicked man (or a wicked person) turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. ²² None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. (what is the righteousness he has done? He turned? He turned away. That is the righteousness)²³ Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord God, “and not that he should turn from his ways and live? ²⁴“But when a righteous man (look at that) turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? (Answer; No!) All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die.***

So, the question, therefore, in the context of this parable: what is the one fruit that God is always looking for? The answer is – yes, somebody already said, “Unless you repent!” What is that fruit? It is the ability to change our mind. That is the fruit. You see, we look at love, we look at joy, we look at peace, we look at long-suffering, we look at all the fruit of the spirit but let me tell you – those fruit, that fruit is only possible because we have an ability to change our mind and that is the gift that God gives. The first fruit that He expects in our lives, is the fruit of repentance. And you find this in *Luke’s Gospel*.

Luke 3:8

⁸ ***Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.***

So, if anybody says to you, “I am born a Baptist, a Methodist,” whatever-ist, you are a ‘Pappist.’ Even if you are a pa-pist, you are a pappist. Doesn’t matter. So, lot of people say, “Right from the childhood, I was in the Church.” God says, “Baba, don’t say that ‘Abraham is our father’,” in other words. And he says, “You have to bear forth fruits worthy of repentance.” And then, he says, look at the context, look at the beautiful context. He says,

Matthew 3:10

¹⁰ ***And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.***

And, when people heard this message, they are cut to the heart, they ask this question, “What shall we do?”

Acts 2:37

³⁷ ***Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”***

Luke 3:11-13

¹⁰ ***So the people asked him, saying, “What shall we do then?” ¹¹ He answered and said to them, “He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.” ¹² Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” ¹³ And he said to them, “Collect no more than what is appointed for you.”***

In other words, he knows exactly what tax collectors want to do? They want to take more money from you. And they will keep sending you intimidations to grab more money. You know, it’s very interesting thing that happened to me, really scared me. You remember what Pastor keep telling us? “They never return our money.” When you file tax returns, how many of you got your money back? My dad got; I got my money back for the first time. And, I got it with internet transfer, and I got a receipt also and I said, “Oh! My goodness, I am a counter example.” Somehow, the tax people have given my money back. They always want to... That is what He is telling to the tax collectors and the soldiers came. Now, the police people, those people who collect Hafta (Bribe), they came.

Luke 3:14

¹⁴ ***Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, “And what shall we do?” So he said to them, “Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.”***

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If you look at the context here, there is one what we call as, a general command or general fruit of repentance, and there is specific command or what we call as specific fruit of repentance. How do I know this? Look at that. Let's read that verse again.

Acts 2:37

³⁷Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

So, the people.... Other translation will say, "The multitudes." Everybody in the multitude – you had Pharisees, you had carpenters, you had plumbers, you had Levites, you had Priests, you had all kinds of people they came and said, "What shall we do?" and he gives them a general command. What is the general command? He says,

Luke 3:11

¹¹He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."

So, this particular command is for tax collectors, is for soldiers; it is for every kind of people. What is this general command? The general commandment is the first commandment. What is the first commandment? "Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength." If you have done that, one thing that automatically flows from your heart is love for others. You understand that? That is what we call as general commandment. And you will see that in *Romans 13:8* onwards.

Romans 13:8-10

⁸Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. (Why?)⁹For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹⁰ Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

So, He gives them general commandment to everybody, "Love one another." And then, of those people, there are specific commands He gives to specific kinds of people. The tax-collectors come and ask Him, "What shall we do, to express our love for another?" And He knows, specifically what is the struggle of the tax-collector. What is the struggle of the tax-collector? Money, money, money. So, He gives the specific command. What is the specific command? It says,

Luke 3:12-13

¹²Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?"¹³ And he said to them, "Collect no more than you are authorized to do."

And the police people. I think right from, 2000 years back, they had the same problem. Hafta (Bribe); it is no different. Even today, they have the same problem. What is the problem? "Sir, de do (Give bribe)." I remember at Basheerbagh, not basheerbagh; Tank bund intersection, on my bike, I didn't see the red light; I overshot. Immediately, the pot belly came, "Stop." He was so upset with me and switched off my engine, "Side me rakho! (Keep aside)." I recognized it. Now, put the bike down, and sat next to him. He asked me, "Kya karey? (What are you doing?)" "Sorry, sir!" "Challan, bharna padta (You will have to pay, Challan.)" "Kitna chahiye? Mai de dunga. (How much you want? I will give off)." "Yahe pe park kariye (Park, here only), I'll just to the ATM and withdraw the money. You tell me how much you want me to pay. I will give it to you." "Jando, jando, 200 rupee de do jao. (Forget it, give Rs.200 and go.)" I said, "Sir, you don't worry. You just give me challan. Jitna bhi hai mai bhardunga! (How much it may be, I will pay)." "Arey, abhi sir. Waha par hai, jo bhi dena hai de do. (Arey, Sir is over there. Give whatever you want to." "Sir, Nahi karsakte aisa. (Can't do, sir!) Park my bike. Mai jatou (go to the ATM) withdraw the money and I will give it to you." And he looked at me, "What do you do?" Those days, I was a lecturer. I said, "I work in IIT, as a faculty." "Tumhare jaise log, bhaut kam hai, jao! (There are very few people like you, go!)" And he left me. That is their problem. You go anywhere; you go the post office. The postman will expect bribe. He will look at you like that. Unbelievable. It is unbelievable. See the same problem? What is God doing? He is looking at general commandment and he is looking at specific struggles. Specific sins, which will cause death in each one of our lives. You look at each one of them and say, "Thank God I am not a tax-collector." "Thank God I am not a police fellow." Ah! See that is

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how we get rid of, and we overshoot and we just get away. What God is saying is, there is a principle. There is a general commandment to love. And there is specific struggle of each one of us. For example, remember last Sunday; not last Sunday, Sunday before that; Pastor was talking of, the one sin Joshua struggled with? If you heard the message, "Fear," specific, *Be strong and courageous*, In case you forgot that, "*Be strong and courageous.*" Moses didn't struggle with fear. The specific sin of Joshua was fear. General sin – love; but specific sin – fear. Husbands, specific sin you struggle is to, "Love your wives." Wives, specific sin that you will struggle with is to, "Honor your husbands." Children, the specific sin that you struggle with is to, "Submit and to obey your parents as to the Lord." Slaves, specific sin that you struggle with, is with your master, especially when your master who is unrighteous. And masters, the specific sin, that you will struggle with, is to take care of your slaves.

Specific, there is general commandment and there are specific commandments and let me tell you something – what causes death in a believer? There are some sins which lead to death and some which need not lead to death but there is a death which occurs, even in terms of our relationship. Even if it is temporary, death. God stops speaking to us. That's exactly what happened to Abraham, one thing he committed, God stopped speaking. And there is death in that relationship. And there is only one thing that causes death in a relationship is the what sin? Specific sin. You know what? Adam and Eve were not given general sin; there were given, what? Specific sin. What is that specific sin? "Now, you shall not eat of the knowledge of good and evil." And that's the specific sin which they broke and what happened? Death came. Death doesn't come because of general. Death comes because of specific and each one has their own specific. The danger of not taking care of specific sins. You see, you find this paradigm in the Old Covenant, and we look at very specific paradigm, the last words of David to his son Solomon. This is found in,

1 Kings 2:1-3

¹ When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son. ²"I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, act like a man, (I like that) ³and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go.

Okay, that is what command? Specific or general? General. General. Come on! It's observe the law; read the Bible. How many of you get that command? Read the Bible. Pray every day. Everybody gets that command. That's exactly the same thing he's telling Solomon. Look at the specifics though. And that is disturbing. That is really disturbing. The specifics that he gives has not got anything to do with Solomon's character, but it's got to do with Solomon's power. Look at what he says.

1 Kings 2:5-6

⁵ "Now you yourself know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me—what he did to the two commanders of Israel's armies, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether. He killed them, shedding their blood in peacetime as if in battle, and with that blood he stained the belt around his waist and the sandals on his feet. ⁶ Deal with him according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to the grave in peace.

Political specifics. Another political specific:

1 Kings 2:8-9

⁸ "And remember, you have with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, who called down bitter curses on me the day I went to Mahanaim. When he came down to meet me at the Jordan, (It's interesting right? Let him curse for God has allowed him to curse, but that things is still in his heart. Dekhloonga beta! Mein nahi kare toh, mera beta karoonga! -- I'll see, if I don't it, my son will.) I swore to him by the Lord: 'I will not put you to death by the sword.' ⁹ But now, do not consider him innocent. You are a man of wisdom; you will know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood."

That is a specific. What should the specifics be that David should have spoken to Solomon? You see, people in power, they have certain specific struggles and the Bible is so fantastic, it actually tells you exactly what you will struggle with, especially when you come into positions of leadership.

1 Kings 2:10

¹⁰ ***Then David rested with his ancestors and was buried in the City of David.***

But look at the specific that David told the king. What should have David told Solomon? *Deuteronomy 17:14-15*, you'll find this.

Deuteronomy 17:14-15

¹⁴ ***"When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,' ¹⁵ you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.***

So, He's saying, this is how you have to set a king over yourself, but what should the king do? The specifics for the king, you see that? The specifics for the king. What are the specifics for the king?

Deuteronomy 17:16-20

¹⁶ ***But he shall not multiply horses for himself, (So, what should have David said? Solomon, don't multiply horses for yourself, please.) nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, (Don't go down to Egypt to multiply more horses, please.) for the Lord has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.' ¹⁷ Neither shall he multiply wives for himself...***

He should have told Solomon, "Please, Solomon, one thing I did and I'm bearing the brunt of that. I multiplied wives. You know the mess that has happened in the kingdom because of that. Please don't multiply wives. Specific!

...lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. (Specific again! And then?) ¹⁸ ***"Also it shall be*** (Look at this: this is fantastic!), ***when he sits on the throne of his kingdom...***

What should he do for himself? He should write the law. In other words, he should call the Levites, please bring me the scroll: I want to write from *Genesis 1* to *Deuteronomy 32*. I want to write everything for myself. And the Levites will keep on observing – Grammar mistake over there. Cut it off and write. Do you know that Francis Bacon quote? "Reading makes a broad man. Speaking makes a ready man. Writing makes an exact man." So, write, even as you write, that is what you tell children, right? Express yourself when you write. You become more exact. You know what thoughts are going into your head. You meditate upon it. Write it. Meditate upon it. You know what happened? Because that specific was not given to Solomon, the law was even lost and they lost the copy of the law in the House of the Lord until Josiah discovers, it several hundred years later. You see, I'll tell you something – when God gives us specific commandments and we don't obey them, as parents, as children, it has consequences not only for us; it also has consequences for our children. It has devastating consequences. You see? For example, if you're not faithful in the handling of money, let's say. We, as parents, don't have the discipline of handling money righteously, you do that and you're unrighteous with money what happened to Gehazi will happened to him and to his entire household, because he could not handle the specific command of handling money. That is dangerous! Dangerous! Dangerous! Specific commands God gives us and we have to be very careful. And do you know something? It's the specifics which are difficult, not the general. Like I was telling on Sunday, "Son, on the way to school and back home, don't commit adultery. Don't steal a bank. Don't commit a murder. Obey me." What will happen? He will come home and say, "Papa! I obeyed you. I did not commit murder. I did not commit adultery. I did not steal." That is general. But what is the specific? "Son, don't waste time. Come home early. Don't fool around with other friends. Come home early. That is the specific. The specifics are so important. If you fool around with the specifics, you'll have long term consequences and that is not me. It is the Bible. Don't fool around with the specifics. When we fight with the specifics, we all do. When we have mentorship sessions with pastors, one of the things is that he gives me specifics and those are the specifics that I really hate. Honestly, come on now! But that specific has the capacity to destroy me spiritually.

...that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. ¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, ²⁰ that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren,

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What happens when people are given the authority? They think they're better than the others. No! Be careful! You know when you study, do you think people in top schools, they think they're the cat's whiskers. They have an aura about themselves the way they walk, etc, etc. The ivy league attitude is a demonic attitude – it's pride from the pit of hell. What happens to Solomon? You see how systematically he breaks the specifics. You want to see? See and observe.

1 Kings 3:1

¹Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; (Don't go down to Egypt! He not only went down to Egypt, he married Pharaoh's daughter also. He married the daughter of the devil.) **then he brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall all around Jerusalem.**

1 Kings 10:26-27

²⁶ And Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen,(Multiplying chariots-- please don't do that. What did he do? Multiplied chariots.) **whom he stationed in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem.** (Don't multiply silver and gold.)**²⁷ The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones...**

Haha! The silver was so abundant that stone and silver has the price. That much of wealth multiplication. You know sometimes I feel, when you look at the kind of deals these sportsmen have, not the tennis stars, but football stars. Ridiculous! 32 million pounds a year! I mean, the surprising thing is that why did they not actually fall into worse sin. They're already messed up in their personal lives, but it's surprising they have not gone into the depths, especially the NBA stars and the football stars in Europe, have you seen their lifestyle? Messed up totally. Why? They don't know how to handle money. They don't have character to handle money. They don't have it. You see God has to give us success, but we should have the character to handle success. Why don't many people succeed? Because they don't have the character to handle success. We're like the children of Israel! O Lord! We can't do anything. We can't do anything. Okay! Run around Jericho for seven times in seven days and on the seventh day seven times. Boom! Everything falls and they go and conquer Jericho. Ah, now we can take it easy. Ah Lord! Simple! Overconfident once, absolutely no confidence before! We're like that.

...and he made cedar trees as abundant as the sycamores which are in the lowland. (And then what happened?) **²⁸ Also Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh;** (Where should you not go to get horses from? Have you seen how he broke the specific commandments?)**the king's merchants bought them in Keveh at the current price.** **²⁹ Now a chariot that was imported from Egypt cost six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse one hundred and fifty; and thus, through their agents,**(Boy! You look at this! This is agents already there.) **they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria.**

And then,

1 Kings 11:1-3

¹ But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites— **² from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, "You shall not intermarry with them,(specifics!) nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods."** **Solomon clung to these in love.** (And then what happened?)**³ And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines...**

You know what he set? He actually positioned himself to fall. One wife is not sufficient to fall. Two wives are not sufficient to fall. Alas! I'm not falling! That's exactly so many believers! they put the Lord their God to test. One site! Okay. Okay. I'm not falling. Another. Another. Another. putting yourself in positions to fall.

...and his wives turned away his heart. **⁴ For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.**

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My dear brothers and sisters, when you come under mentorship, you know what God is going to give you? Specific commands. And you so many young children over here. One specific command – honor your father and your mother. Honor your elders and submit to their authority. It will go well with you and you take that, it doesn't matter; every other command that you think you're keeping you would have messed up your life because you failed in the specifics and not in the general. So, it happened; what should you do? He should not become more proud than his brothers, right? Look at what Solomon did. Because of all this, this is exactly what happens to him.

1 Kings 12:2-4

² So it happened, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard it (he was still in Egypt, for he had fled from the presence of King Solomon and had been dwelling in Egypt), ³ that they sent and called him. Then Jeroboam and the whole assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, ⁴ “Your father made our yoke heavy...

You see what he did? He exalted himself above his brothers. His heart was lifted above his brothers. Everything that the Lord said would happen in the book of Deuteronomy happened to Solomon specifically. That's a warning to all of us.

...now therefore, lighten the burdensome service of your father, and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.”

So, what is the specific commandment God is giving me? I want to look at one specific commandment for all of us. And it might be very disturbing. Several specifics, but one specific which encapsulates all specifics. Look at this – this is found in,

Luke 10:40-42

⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” (and the specific that Martha is given: how many things? Everybody say? Can I hear you? How many things? Is it specific or general? Specific!) **⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, (that is to sit at my feet and to submit to my authority everyday of your life. That is one specific thing that you have to do.)and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”**

And you have a lot of young people over here. Otherwise, you know what will happen? You are distracted with much serving. Have you seen so much of our energy is dissipated on stupid things? I mean, we're researchers. We go to the lab. Concentration is all around the place and to get the concentration on the thesis, oh my goodness, what a battle it is! And this is coming. That is coming. Boss will call! This class. That class. That tutorial, and by the evening all our energies are scattered. Do you face that in your life where you are not able to the one specific thing that God has asked you to do? Distracted with so many things.

1 Peter 5:5

5 Likewise you younger people, submit (come under mentorship. Come under discipline. Be disciplined at an early age.) yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

Look at this. This is one of my favorite verses in the NLT(New Living Translation) that I'm reading. This is Lamentations. Everybody knows this, but look at this. This is fantastic translation!

Lamentations 3:27

²⁷ And it is good for people to submit at an early age to the yoke of his discipline

Otherwise, you know what is going to happen? When you do not submit to the yoke of discipline at a very young age, by the time you grow up, you will not have the tenacity and the character to channel your energies and you will dissipate so much of your energies on stupid things. And therefore, I'll come to a tennis star. Look at this guy. What's his name? Yeah, Rafa Nadal! That's why there are not many tennis stars. I'm telling you this guy, honestly, I'm going to write his biography if he gives me chance. I would not mind. I read an article in the morning. They were discussing as to why this guy is successful like this. Crazy! The crazy part about his success is, 11 French open Grandslams. That is mind boggling! I'll tell you why. It is

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the most difficult exercise in tennis. Not Wimbledon! Wimbledon is ballet dancing. What do you have? Serve! volley! serve! volley! But on a clay court and especially on Roland Garros, you have to earn every point. It is an exercise and an examination in stamina and skill and endurance. And people just go crazy. And this guy, not one French Open, people said, "One French Open is great! Two French Open is great! We thought Bjorn Borg was the greatest! He got six French Opens! This guy, ten and the recent one, eleven!" Eleven French Open titles and he becomes a legend. Somebody analyzed him. This is secular media and I was reading this article in the morning. One of the first things I do in the morning is, I read my Bible and also read Rafa! This is about Rafa. This is fantastic!

"One word that defines Rafael Nadal is certainty! (Boy! when I read that, I was stunned when somebody who's observing this guy says, "You know what? This guy is absolutely consistent.") Since the time the young nineteen year old announced himself to the world with his first French Open win in 2004, he has approached the game with unerring uniformity. (You know what uniformity is? I'll tell you what uniformity is. Sun – static example. Earth goes around the sun 365 days. Does it change? No. 365 days. You can predict the exact position of the earth at any given point of time – that is what we call as uniformity. There is unerring uniformity in this guy. That's what he's saying. Remember Isaiah, right? He is saying, "Listen, O heavens! Listen, O earth! I brought up children but they rebelled against Me. You fellows, you go with unerring uniformity. My people, my goodness, the most indisciplined fellows, we don't know where they are." Look at what goes on. Look at this. This is fantastic, okay? This is secular media talking about a secular guy – "Perhaps," what is the one thing that was consistent? It was mentorship. Tony Nadal in the stance. "Tony introduced Rafael to tennis when he was just 3 years and continued coaching him till January last year, helping him to win 16 Grand Slams, including 10 French Opens during the course of their association." It says, "Tony was Rafael's coach for 28 years." Wow. Have a mentor for one year, Christian. Forget about 20 years. "He was the one who famously told Rafael to abandon his two-handed forehand for a one-handed left hand and that has become the most lethal weapon in men's tennis." The greatest forehand in the history of tennis is Rafa's, with, what we call as the helicopter forehand. The winner recorded in the French Open was 4800 rpm. It's crazy. It stays hit. Period. Once he hits the ball, it is bye-bye baby. It's gone. And you know what he says? So, you look at the product. Like Pastor keeps saying, "You look at the product. You like the product but you don't like the process of the product." Look at the process. "The never-say-die attitude in chasing seemingly lost causes and the impeccable behavior on court," have you seen tennis players smashing their rackets, including our great Roger Federer? You tell me once you have seen him, in his entire career, smashing one racket. They actually want to kill the opponent but they can't do that. So, they hit the racket. "You should die, you fellow!" And they go and pick up the other racket. You know what Tony used to tell him, "I am not going to chase your balls. You have to chase your own balls. Chase them." "The impeccable behavior on court have been characteristic traits, credited for which Tony should be the only party." Boy, I said, "Lord, how many of us in Christendom have a mentor for one year consistently?" That is the one thing many of us lack. Everybody is doing what is coming into their own minds. It's like the days of Judges. "What is happening in the Worship Team?" "I don't know. Everybody is doing whatever they want to do." "What is happening the sound team?" "I don't know. Everybody is doing whatever they want to do." I'm just giving examples. "What is happening in the Bible study?" "I don't know. Everybody is doing whatever they want to do." "What is happening in the school?" "I don't know. Everybody is doing whatever they want to do." They don't have the simple courtesy to come and inform the eldership what they are doing. And he said, "Any wonder that we are absolutely scattered when it comes to our energies?" We are not focused.

Look at what he says. He goes on to say; I'm not done with Rafa yet. "If you have a great guide who looks after you from a young age and you start training under those people, there is little chance that you wouldn't end up successful. So, look for that mentor," says Nikhil Sharma, CEO of Net Sports Management. Look for that mentor. And how does this fellow become world class? Do you know how this fellow becomes world class? He says, "Sharma invokes Malcolm Gladwell's 10,000 hour rule that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to become world class in any field. So, if a family member or a coach looks after you at a young age in any vocation, chances are, you would have completed 10,000 hours of practice, giving you a great chance to become world class in your field." So, I was counting the number of hours we heard the sermon. So, let's say one hour on an average. 52 weeks plus Wednesday. So, 100 hours per year; times 10 = 1000 hours. So, we've got, at least, another 10 more years to go. But, of course, that is in the secular field. But if you submit to God at an early age, look at this guy. That is the reason why I have respect for him because of his attitude, because of the process; not just because of talent. Roger Federer has talent; he is the GOAT – Greatest Of All Time. You can give an aculeate. And you know what they call him? They call him 'GCOAT' – Greatest Competitor Of All Time. It helps to have someone at the start to do the thinking for you. Children, you don't know what is right and what is wrong. Let your parents do the thinking for you. Don't say, "I know." What do children always say, "Mama, Papa, I know." Really? You know? If you know, why is your life messed up like

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this? You know. You see? “Drawing the parallel, Sharma says, ‘Most achievers in any field have a set routine. About 80-90% of their lives is very sorted, compartmentalized and disciplined’.” No wonder we emphasize this over and over in our Church. What is that? It is good for people to submit at an early age to the yoke of discipline. I’ll tell you, my little young brothers and sisters over here, including my daughters – what a privilege you have! You have no idea that you have mentors who are doing the thinking for you and the chances are they will have, at least, 10,000 hours of thinking that they will do for you in the next 20 years that will set you for life.

And then, you will say, “Vijay, I came to the Lord very late in life. What do I have? You don’t have any hope for me?” No, I also came late in life. *2 Timothy 1:7* – the fruit of the Spirit. One of the fruit. Do you know what he says?

2 Timothy 1:7

⁷for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

Do you know what the Spirit gives you actually? Self-discipline. He gives you. He has already given you. Exercise it. Let it bear fruit in our lives. Exercise it. Pastor keeps telling us, right? If you take 40 days, you can break any habit. 40 days, it takes. Take a 40-day challenge. What is the habit? You have a habit of speaking a lot on the phone or not exercising. Take a 40-day challenge. Let’s see. Why? Not because we have the ability in ourselves; because He gave us the Spirit of self-discipline. Other translations will say, “Sound mind.” You know why? Because discipline is the state of mind. The ability to change is starting in the mind. That is the first fruit God is looking for, my dear brothers and sisters – the ability to change the way we think in our mind – sound mind. This is the promise of the New Covenant, by the way. This is New Covenant. I didn’t say it. New Covenant, *Hebrews 10*.

Hebrews 10:15-16

¹⁵But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ¹⁶“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,”

You know what is happening? Even now, even as you are submitting to teaching, God is writing His laws, specific laws to young people in the minds who are yielded to Him and He is saying, “You can start today. You can do that today.” So, if you don’t practice this, what will happen?

Hebrews 6:4-6

⁴For it is impossible...

I didn’t say that. If you have a problem, please don’t content with me. Paul also anonymously didn’t say it because they will all sit on his head so nobody knows who wrote it so everybody says God wrote it; not man.

Hebrews 6:4-6

⁴For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, ⁵and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶and then have fallen away, to restore them to again (To restore them back to the change of mind is what? Everybody say loudly impossible) *repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.*

So, he has to substantiate the statement, right? Why is he saying that?

Hebrews 6:7-8

⁷For land that has drunk the rain that often falls on it, and produces a crop (the repentance and production of crop is going together) *useful to those for whose sake it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God. ⁸But if it bears thorns and thistles, it is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned.*

And when you all read this, what will happen? Your heart will start to beat against your chest. It doesn’t happen to you? It happens to me every time. This is the one verse I want to avoid. I read it and I also read the next verse. Look at the next verse.

Hebrews 6:9-10

⁹Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not unjust so as to overlook your work and the love that you have shown for his name in serving the saints, as you still do.

Even we speak alike this but you know what? We are persuaded others – the better things and things that accompany salvation is a fruit of repentance. The ability to constantly change our mind even as we are fed by the Word of God. He said He will write His law in our heart and in our minds and He will cause us to walk in His ways.

My question is: is God pointing out the one specific sin in our lives? The sin so easily besets you is right there beside you and you know it and if you don't deal with it, there is a warning in the Scripture.

Numbers 32:23

²³But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out.

But thank God, it doesn't leave us without hope. There is always hope. The very fact that we come here every Wednesday, there is hope for us. Expectancy in our heart and we need to come and say, "Lord, I want to change. I want to allow You to cause me to change in my life." And what is that one thing that is blocking you? He knows what we are struggling with. Husbands, who are struggling to love their wives, wives struggling to love, respect and their husbands; children, with your elders, you may be struggling with discipline. The most common-ist struggle, I'm sorry I'm killing your English but I am an engineer and I have the license to kill the language. It's a slow process; you know what God says to Joshua? You will be able to conquer them little by little; they will all not go in one day because if in one day, it will go; what will happen? Wild animals will come. What happens to people when they become successful? Even in the spiritual case, what happens? Pride sets in, it's a dangerous thing. God has His plan; don't be in a hurry because God is not in a hurry. Little by little, one day at a time, start killing habits. As I say, Habit when you take off the "H" you have "abit". When you take off the "A" you have "bit". When you take off the "B" you still have "it". When you take off the H,A,B,I and T and finally its gone. Amen! Let's all pray this evening.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we thank You for speaking to us. Father, we believe that You have spoken to us, pointing out to the areas where we struggle specifically. Father, we are all in this journey but You said, Father, little by little, O Lord, let it be done. Even if it is one bit at a time but let us progress in our walk with You. Enable us, Lord, not to grow weary in doing good because You said in due season, you will reap if we do not lose heart and enable us not to lose heart and to be consistent, constant and enable us to come under mentorship, enable us to choose godly mentors who will speak into our lives and to submit to their eldership and leadership in our lives. O Lord, especially, put that spirit in young people who will come voluntarily to the elders in the Church and they will come under authority and leadership so that it can go well with them. It is good as You said, O Lord, for people who have a self-disciplined yolk when they are young. Enable us, Lord, to come under discipline as we hear Lord even in the secular world; self-discipline is a free man's yoke. We have to take it up on ourselves. You will not force it up on ourselves, O Lord. Enable us to take it up on ourselves, O Lord and to walk with You. We thank You; we praise You; we worship You and even as we go back home, reach us to our home safely. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen!