

What Do You Want Me To Do, Lord?

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Father this morning we come to You, we come to You Lord because we know You are the Author of life and You have, You alone have, the words of life. Spirit of God we submit ourselves entirely as much as we know how: spirit, soul and body. Help us, Lord, to hear from You. Unless You show we will not see, unless You break, no bondage will be broken. Unless You set free, no captive can go free. Unless You touch we will remain blind, we will not see. You're welcome here, more than welcome, take lordship Lord, because it is written - where the Spirit is Lord, there is liberty. Only You can bring that. We come under Your Lordship today. Once again I pray let there be only One speaker and all of us listeners. As Your Word, over and over, tells us - he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says. Help us to hear this morning too, Lord. For in Jesus' name we pray. Amen, Amen, Amen.

We're coming to the last 27, 28 days, the year will be over. Many of you may be filling down the promises, the promises, the promises still waiting for it to come to pass, not just this year, but the previous years as well. Don't give up; write them down, hold on to them because the One who promised is faithful. We have a precedent in our system, at some time workers get all their previous arrears in one shot, and they're ecstatic because, five years arrears come in one shot. So believe, you never know, in one shot, it all comes through because God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son a man that He should repent or change His mind. He is not.

So we're coming to the end of this, right? "Repent! Revive! Resist!" That doesn't mean it ends, because until the last breath He is still saving us. And if you keep going to Him the Word of God says that He will save us to the uttermost, uttermost. That's *Hebrews 7:25*, by now I believe you know your verses.

Hebrews 7:25

²⁵ Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

Much of our issues are connected with salvation, because we do not fully understand or seek to know 'What am I saved from? And what am I saved unto?' We struggle because we do not really understand the awesomeness of salvation. The greatest miracle or act of God in His entire history of creation is the redemption of man, it is not the creation, it's not the new creation, nothing. There is no greater miracle or act of God other than the act of the redemption of the fallen man. It's nothing consumable to that, nothing. You see will ever understand in eternity how could God become man, a womb of a virgin and be born, be without sin, live without sin and then die on the Cross for our sin and then rise up on the third day to set us free. And that's why the angels scratch their heads and say, 'What is that? What is man that (God) You are mindful of them. Even they can't figure it out. They are attending every church service because they know the wisdom of God, even for them, is through the Church. It's a miracle, it's a miracle, it's a miracle.

And therefore we need to be very, very, careful because I know almost every one of you have come in from the world, six days in the world and the seventh day or the first day of the week we are in the house and the pastor has a struggle to get your mind back to the Lord. So we need the Holy Spirit and that is called 'power steering,' to get you back, otherwise, we will struggle. Because the value system is completely inverted, completely inverted. Because what happens is we value lightly what we ought to value very highly, and we end up valuing highly, what we ought to value lightly. Salvation itself, the act of salvation. If it took God, in His Son, to die, to be buried and to be raised upon the third day to save us, you need to understand how radical salvation is, how radical salvation is. And there are verses in the Bible like, you know, very familiar verses for many of you, *2 Corinthians 5:17*, it is a very radical verses.

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

And this is where our struggle lies; our struggle lies in this because we are struggling in letting the old things pass away, and allowing new things to happen according to the new birth. That's our struggle. But this God has spoken, positionally true, and functionally He's working it out as we cooperate with Him or the other verse we are familiar with,

2 Corinthians 4:18

¹⁸ ***while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.***

The things that we, while we do not look at things which are seen. Is it possible? Because we're all looking at things that is seen, but the Bible says that yet we are not looking at things that are seen but things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. So how do we work this out? How do we work this out? or let's look at another verse like Galatians 5:6,

Galatians 5:6

⁶ ***For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.***

Neither circumcision or uncircumcision matters, only one thing matters, what is that? ***But faith working through love.*** Only thing that matters is faith that works through love. Therefore we come to the preaching of the Word of God because faith comes from hearing and hearing from the Word of God. So we put all the Scriptures over there so that your faith does not rest in the wisdom of man, eloquence of man, smartness of man, but rests on the Word of God and the power of His Holy Spirit. If you turn this with me this morning first to 2 Timothy chapter 1 and verse 9,

2 Timothy 1:9

⁹ ***who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,***

I want to look today at the awesomeness of salvation so that we learn before the year is end to learn to value highly what is important in God's sight, and take lightly what is important in the world's eyes. ***Who has saved us and called us with the holy calling.*** Did you see that? Both the call of salvation and subsequently when you discover your purpose, God's intended purpose in this time, in this life it's a holy calling. The very call of salvation, Pastor Vijay when he was leading worship, he said, 'Come unto Me all you who are weary,' it's a holy calling. The call of salvation itself is a holy calling, it's not an ordinary calling, the holy calling.

...with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began. Did you see? The holy calling was before time began. Before any one of us were even born, even before creation happened, God had called us. Can you even think about something like that? Do you understand why we are sitting here, in the house of God? Because we were called and it was a holy calling, even before time began in Christ Jesus.

not according to our works, but according to His own purpose. We were just not just a holy calling, not before just before time, but it was for His purpose, His own purpose. His own purpose and Grace which was given to us. It will be never by our effort, our strength, our might, our works, from the beginning till the end it will be by the power of His Holy Spirit alone; by grace and grace and grace alone. Once you get this, this should take priority over everything else in life; the holy call of God. Okay, there are two parts in it; first part is the call to salvation. The second part is when you discover, what does God intend, a saved person to do in this lifetime which will determine your eternity. But I have to give you a statutory warning, okay. In *Matthew 22* and verse 14 remember the parable of the wedding feast, Jesus uses parable to explain very important truths in the Kingdom.

Matthew 22:14

¹⁴ ***"For many are called, but few are chosen."***

For many are called, but few are chosen. Many are called, few are chosen, which is true; both, in case of salvation and both in the case of purpose. The Gospel has gone to the ends of the earth, but there is a response that is needed. Many

people don't respond, many people don't respond. So very few are chosen, there is the choosing of God and there's a response of man. When it comes to purpose too, most people, most Christians if we study the Bible, you will realize, many will go through life saved, but without ever discovering their purpose. What is the reason? It's given in verse 5 "they made light of it."

Matthew 22:5

⁵ But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.

That's what I said people take lightly the things which are of eternal significance, and take very seriously things which are temporary. Almost everything if you take pause for 30 seconds, and check your mind almost everything you are concerned about is temporal. Almost everything. I can't get into your minds, but I can tell you, it's temporal. But what you are not concerned about are eternal and the problem is they made light, and the call went, when the invitation of God came they took it lightly. And this morning first God is saying, don't take it lightly, take it with the utmost seriousness, because many are called, many are called, many are called. One of the beautiful examples, prime examples in the Bible is, it's a man called Esau, technically he was the one who was called simply by the virtue of being the first born, but he took his call very lightly. He looked at eternal things with contempt, therefore when a time came in his life he was rejected, he was rejected because he took it very lightly. Peter will say this way in 2 Peter chapter 1 and verse 10

2 Peter 1:10

¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

Therefore brethren be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, make very diligent. Of course he will give us seven things which you need to keep on adding to your faith and in increasing measure, that's how you will know and be absolutely sure about your election and your call so that you can receive a rich welcome into the Kingdom of God. Make sure, make sure, make sure. Details are given and he says, 'Increase that, keep increasing so that you will be very fruitful in the Kingdom of God in this life.' And if you were to fast forward into time we would reach a place in Revelation 17 and verse 14 where the Bible says,

Revelation 17:14

¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."

These will make war with the Lamb and the Lamb will overcome them for He is the Lord of lords the King of kings and those who are with Him, these are the ones who took it very seriously in their lifetime; they took the call very, very, seriously; both the call of salvation and the purpose of God in their life they took it very, very, seriously and how are they described? The called, the chosen and the faithful. And we saw over the weeks one of the most important characteristics God looks for is faithfulness. If you listen to that message, of course preached in Hindi with English translation, 'Are You a Steward or Are You an Owner?' There's only one owner, that is God, we are all stewards, and stewards have to be faithful, faithful first to the call of salvation and to the purpose of God because we'll all stand before God and give account. Go to another passage which is in Romans chapter 8 and verse 29 and 30.

Romans 8:29

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

For whom He foreknew, there are certain things which God cannot help; He knows everything. So He knew before time began, He knew everyone who'd respond to His call, ***He predestined***, then the predestination comes and we get all confused. No. What He predestined whom you knew was to be conformed to the image of His Son. Don't forget that don't take that lightly, that is what Peter was talking about. Add these things, because when you add this thing you are being conformed to a particular image, the image Adam and Eve lost when they fell. That image is being reconstructed in Christ Jesus, to be conformed to His image. And the Bible says, '***Conformed to the image that He might be the first***

born, moreover whom He predestined these He also called, that happens in time. That happens in time. Each one of you can know, all those who are saved will know, I can know, in 1984, in month of October last week, I know that is when what God knew before the beginning of time; the chronos and the keros crossed, the point when it came to me and each one of you can know when exactly that took place, took place, there's a time when what God knew before time began and we who were caught in time encountered Christ in time, that's where and those whom He called, what did He do first? He justified, He justified them; He declared them without sin because they believed in Jesus and the Spirit of God gave them new birth. He justified, now that He has justified, He also glorified between this and glorification which is in eternity there is *'many are called, few are chosen,'* few are chosen. So if you flip to verse 28, very comforting verse.

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. All things do not work for the good of all, it doesn't, it only works for those who are called, who have discovered purpose, for them God will turn everything around, even their mistakes He will turn around. For others it doesn't happen. You can look through the Bible, it doesn't happen, so it's not a blanket promise, it's not a blank check. He says, 'You are called to be saved, you have responded to the call of salvation and then there is something lying in between and if you respond to that, you discover it, you seek it, you search it, you find it and you discover it and you walk in it everything will work for your good.' There is the two-fold purpose of God; one inside conforming to His image, the image of Jesus, and the other is fulfilling His purpose in this time. Another scripture, last night we looked at it, *1 Corinthians 1:8 and 9*

1 Corinthians 1:8

⁸ who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

What is He want to do at the end? We know subsequent scriptures *1 Thessalonians 5:23* and all,

1 Thessalonians 5:23

²³ Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify[a] you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When that time comes when we exit out of planet earth we should be found blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. How blameless? Blameless in spirit, soul and body; blameless in His sight absolutely, this is the end, this is the end, this is what God intends. ***And God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*** We looked at it last time and said, we use these two terms in English "means" and "ends", "means" are the way you reach an end, but sometimes we get so caught up in the means we forget what the end is. Like we are here in Church, we came, worship is over, prayer is over, Word is going on, then fellowship. What is the purpose behind all of this? What is the end of this? We focus on holiness, what is the end of holiness? We focus on faith because righteousness comes by faith and faith alone, but what is the end of it? Did you see? This is the end – Fellowship; our relationship with God, and of course men, fellowship with Christ, till when? Till oneness happens.

If you listen last night you would have heard first when God speaks, until God speaks nothing happens, every time God speaks something happens, Adam is happy with the animals, he's got all the dogs, all the animals he is very happy and then God says, 'It is not good for man to be alone.' Suddenly Adam feels something because God spoke, now he's lonely, because things happen when God speaks. He's lonely okay, so the first reason for marriage is fellowship and the end of fellowship is that the two shall become one and Paul will turn around and say, 'It's a mystery, it's a mystery, but I am talking about Christ and the Church.' So we need to understand there are various means God uses; worship is a means, prayer is a means, the teaching of the Word of God that might impart faith is a means, but what is the end? If the end is not being achieved, we are still failing. Are you having fellowship with God? Are we still coming to that point where oneness in happening?

That's what happened to Enoch; 300 years he walked with God and God said, 'You have become one with Me, why do you want to stay here? Come up with Me,' and He took him. 300 years of fellowship. Amos will say, 'Can two walk together unless they can agree?' And when it is with God, I have to agree with Him. He doesn't have to agree with me because He's always true and He's always right and He knows everything. So we need to realize everything that we are doing are means, right means. But the question is - is it achieving the desired end? So we are in the 12th month and usually if your academic year is from January to December the country where I grew up it was always like that December was annual exams and then Vacation because it was winter, you have final exams. As we come to the last month we need to ask ourselves. As I look through and grade myself, 'Lord Spirit of God, show me because You are the only One who knows what is true. Show me. Have I come closer to that end? Has my fellowship with You increased?'

Fellowship, so God uses one example on earth which is marriage and He says, 'That is what is the intended result of a marriage on earth.' And this is the intended result He intends from a believer, a walk with God that ends up in fellowship, ends up in oneness. That's how you grade yourself. Otherwise, we will get so stuck with the means. What are the means? Prayer is a means, preaching is a means, hearing and studying the Word, pursuit of holiness, all these things are good. But what is the end? What is the purpose? What is the purpose? So there are terms that are used. It all begins with the call of God. And we already saw the call of God was even before time began, before ever time began God was orchestrating everything; bringing things into our life to that day, that point, when we will respond to His call. The Spirit of God has been working. Everything, in everybody's life, if you are saved or if you are to be saved, if you have responded to the call, even before you responded to the call God was working to bring you to that moment when you would respond to that call. He was working, it's only later when you grow older like this, little more gray hairs or more gray hairs you look back in hindsight and you will realize, 'Oh actually God was there, and He was the One who was changing things around to that point where you had an encounter.' That was the whole idea and what you thought all the terrible drastic things in your life was to bring you to that point. Then from that point you meandered and wandered for a season until you discovered purpose and from there you see your life took another turn. We understand life only in hindsight, those who do not believe will explain it with one law which is real. So there is a law called the law of sowing and reaping. God instilled that law, it is there, He is the One who said, 'What you sow you shall reap,' and Hindus believe in that, they call it the karmic theory in US they say what goes around, comes around. But do you know that law is often suspended for those who believe and discover purpose? That law is suspended, otherwise *Romans 8:28* has no meaning. But that law is suspended.

Romans 8:28

²⁸And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

We know all things work together for the good or to those who love God and those who are called according to His purpose. For those who have obeyed the call of God in their lives, the second call of God in their life; discovered purpose and obeyed by faith, the law of sowing and reaping is suspended. Let me ask you this question, Joseph was in prison and as a slave for 13 years, what did he sow to deserve it? Nothing, nothing, so that law was not working for him, something else was working - the call of God upon his life. It would never be fulfilled until he goes through those 13 years. Or David 14 years running from King Saul, what did he sow to reap that? Nothing, nothing, okay. From *Genesis 11* when you see Abraham leaving the Ur of the Chaldeans, his father leading him coming to Haran and then 12 he enters into the promised land and then you finally see *Genesis 24* he's exiting 13 chapters over there. You need to ask, why is that Abraham did such terrible blunders, outright blunders, even denying his wife as his wife, twice, not once but twice. The kind of stuff he did, yet God brings him out of everything. The simple reason was his problems are only because he obeyed the call, nothing else, nothing else, while Lot who never discovered purpose is rescued only on the day of judgment because of the intercession of somebody else. Why? Because he never obeyed the call of God. So this law don't run under law and say, 'This law is how it works,' no. That's not the law; that law is suspended in the lives of God's people. You go through, go through the lives of people and you will realize in the Kingdom of God what is going in this man's life has got nothing to do with what he has sown. He hasn't sown in sin, he hasn't sown in equity, he's not reaping something because of that or what he has shown in sin, he's not reaping either, what kind of a law is this? Because that's the law written in *Romans 8:28*,

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

All things, all means all: the good, the bad, the ugly; all things work together the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose. That is why it is so important that we understand, we seek, not like the people written in Matthew 28 for who, who took lightly the call of God, lightly the call of God. It only in hindsight we will understand, it is in Genesis 50 and verse 20.

Genesis 50:20

²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

What law is this? He's understanding it in hindsight. This (Genesis 50:20) is *Romans 8:28* in the Old Testament. There are a lot of things you will only understand in hindsight what was happening in your life, because both in the case of salvation because we are hard nuts to break, to bring us to the point of salvation itself do you know what it takes God? It's not easy, it's not easy because we were called before time, but in time we have to respond to that call, but the problem in time we are all on our own trajectory. But because God foreknew He is ordering footsteps, He's changing things and until you get saved and years later when you look back in your life, you will understand, 'Oh that is why this happened, that is why this door was shut and that terrible door was opened and I had no choice I was pushed in through this. All this was one day to encounter Him.

I was telling Dr. Richard I said I was just sitting there and looking at my you know sometimes people like us who are much older we have to go to our class 10 certificates to retrace our years, and I found in the year 1976 I hadn't reached 12 years I was just 11 years old going on to be 12 now I look back we can look back with peace and joy and calmness, but not when it happened. It was the most traumatic days of my life. You see like I said I grew up in paradise, not the one where you get biryani, but up there in the mountains, it was absolutely gorgeous. I grew up there, if I opened my dad's quarters, school was right there where Praneeth is sitting with Giana, that was my life. Meaning if school started at eight you need to get out only at 7:59. You didn't have to do a thing in your life, everything was done for you, everything was done for you, you didn't have to do a thing in your life, all you had to do was study and on top of studying you could do whatever else you want, only one thing - get your marks and you are free and I had the best life possible, not Joel Osteen's, but for real. Dad, Mom and me living in paradise, all the books I want, morning you play badminton, evening you play football, night after studies you play chess or cards, that was life. Then one day I don't know of all times in the middle of the academic year, in the month of October, my father had this weird thought that I will take my last and the only youngest son and put him in a school in Kerala. I don't know why, who thinks about it like that? June academic year begin, this is in October. It's not a simple decision because those days to come from there to here it takes five days.

Now I look back, it is God who put that thought into his life, into his mind. So he comes over, I'm here in my grandfather's house, he goes to Trivandrum where all my other siblings are studying in boarding school, in convents, he goes there and comes back by evening and he tells my mother, the boarding school where my elder brothers are studying St. Joseph's, Sameer also studied over there, he said, 'From this year onwards they have shut their boarding. No more new intake.' And here am I, hanging in Kerala, boarding is closed, so what does he do? He puts me in a school and I'm going from my grandfather's house to the protestant school the only kid to go there. And here is a boy and they left within five days, they put me there, admit me there and they left. Here is a kid who doesn't know what public transport is, who has to walk around 5 to 6 kilometers after the bus ride, one way and both ways to reach school, sitting with a bunch of students have no clue what language they are speaking, I've been joined in the middle of the academy year in class six, and in class six the school has you have already crossed 6 years of Malayalam, and I don't speak it, read it or write it and they (my parents) are gone. You want to know what trauma was, I had no clue how I survived those years, they're just gone, you're not going to see them till the next year, they come every year, like Samuel's mother used to come for festival. But do you know what happened? The first day I went to school, we had assembly in what was called the chapel, and there was worship which I had never heard before, and somebody came and read the Word of God which I had never read or heard before, and every year in the school there were five days given for temperate meetings they called, I wasn't saved but I was hearing something which only I was destined to hear, destined to hear.

Like I said it was very traumatic years because when I tell people, because you need to where I came from to where I came, there I didn't have to do anything, here I had to do everything, everything, including washing your clothes, to ironing your clothes, grandmother cooked the lunch that was all, but everything I had to do. There every day you played, now let me tell you something class 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 seven years, in seven years I must have played in seven years just five days, just five days in seven years, I didn't play. Don't ask me questions why? But those are things that happened; I was not allowed to play, I didn't play. But in the meantime things were happening, my little town in Kerala was a place where all churches are there and during the Christmas vacation when the harvest is over, you have conventions, first comes the TPM, then comes the IPC, then comes AGs, then comes everyone, they all have their conventions, I'm not saved still going to the catholic church, but I would be the only guy from that household who'd still walk down and sit in the field and listen to these white glad people come and breathe thunder and fire. I had no clue what I was doing there, but I didn't miss a single meeting, and still went to the catholic church. You have no clue that if you are chosen God has been working on your life even before you had been saved to bring you to that point where you would hear and get saved.

Then finally for my under graduation, first year even that was a miracle, for the first time in my life without the knowledge of my father, mother or my brothers I quietly slunk in went to Marian's college and put in my application for under-graduation literature, because everybody was supposed to be an engineer or a doctor nothing else in the family. I quietly went in and put this application, I got in, I joined then told them I joined and everybody shut their mouth. I still had to wait a month to get into the hostel, then I got the hostel, I got in, I got in, again like that in the month of October one week later I was saved, now if you look back there is no trauma, there is no trauma because you realize it was purpose. Why did my father bring me in the middle of the academic year? Because God put that thought into his mind. I do believe in the year 1976 boarding was shut in St. Joseph's just for my sake. If they had extended it that year I would have continued in the boarding and like my brothers would have never been saved, never heard the Gospel, I look back and I start seeing things all these things happened, to get to the point where ultimately what's 5 years in this school and all these preachers in this convention couldn't do, until one boy came into my hostel room in the month of October and gave a very simple Gospel message and said, 'Santosh, would you kneel with me and ask Jesus to come into your heart?' But all these things have brought you to that point.

Now if many of you all of you who are saved were to look back you will realize what *Romans 8:28* means. All those things are working first to bring us, to bring us to that point. Hard-headed nuts like us to that point, where we would receive the simplicity of the Gospel that God loved man so much. Okay, that is how it works. But after salvation we come back to Matthew 22 and verse 14.

Matthew 22:14

14"For many are called, but few are chosen."

Between these two events called 'called and chosen' is the difference between converts and disciples. Many of you sitting here are struggling because, like me, in the initial years, for 10 years almost after salvation I was just a convert. I wasn't a disciple. I had my plans, I had my dreams, I had my vision, my vision which was called ambition, put it before God and said, 'Why don't you sanction it?' That's our problem, between the call and the choosing there is always testing. Two primary ways He tests primary large ways; He either makes life difficult or He makes life too easy, I don't know which is your way, either He makes life very hard or He makes life very easy. That's what in the Parable of the Sower Jesus talks about the cares and the deceitfulness of wealth. You have to come through both, and testing is compulsory because you should not be deterred by the hard facts of life, nor entangled by the easy. That is where people miss it, okay.

Joseph was not deterred by the hard knocks of life, Solomon fell apart because of the easy life his father had given him. Both were called, both were incredible young men, unbelievable young man. One came through the hard knock of life and became what God wanted to me, the other fellow just fell apart. And testing is compulsory, without being tested you will not be chosen and you know that every product in the market which is worth your money has been gone through rigorous testing before it can be put in the marketplace. Before Joseph can be presented before in the marketplace of humanity he has to be tested, before David can ascend the throne and be put in the marketplace he has

to be tested, even God's own Son, before He can be presented to the public, He has to be tested in the wilderness, nobody will be chosen unless you are tested. So don't shrink back, this whole year was a year of testing for many. Please remember - no testing, no choosing. So the question is - how will you respond? In Luke chapter 14, verses 25 to 27 actually that whole till 35 not today you can go home and do your homework. It's basically talking,

Luke 14:25-27

²⁵ ***Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷ And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.***

Now great multitudes went with Him who are these? Converts, there is a multitude sitting here. Who are these? Converts. ***He turned and said to them***, so I shall do the same thing, I will also turn and tell you. ***If anyone comes to Me***, if anyone comes to Me. But aren't they with Him? Aren't they all with Him? He says, 'You are with Me, but you're not with Me, you're with me, but you haven't come to Me yet.' Jesus is very strange in His vocabulary. He'll say, 'Who touched Me?' when everybody is touching Him. They're all with Him, but He says, 'You have not come to Me.' ***He turned and said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters yes, his own life also he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*** He uses a very terrible word in English "cannot", not 'should not' or 'will not', He uses the word 'cannot.' He says, 'It's impossible, impossible.' And subsequent verses we know He's talking about counting the cost, He talks about the building and about the two armies and then the punch line is verse 33.

Luke 14:33

³³ ***So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.***

He says, '***So likewise whoever of you does not forsake all,***' Jesus, did You mean all when You said, 'all'? He says, 'I did.' '***All that he has cannot be My disciple.***' Then those who don't respond to this, and ignore, take it very lightly, saved but useless, He puts them across in verse 34 and 35

Luke 14:34

³ ***"Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? ³⁵ It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"***

Lord, is this true? Yes, listen to these studies on the book of Revelation, check the last Church Laodicea, good for nothing, Jesus says, 'You're good for nothing. If you don't change, I'll spew you out of My mouth,' for what? For men to trample upon. You have no testimony, you have no witness. You say that you are rich, and have occurred wealth, and you lack nothing. God says, 'That's not what is true; you're wretched, you're poor, miserable, you're blind, you are naked.' And then He uses a term which is very strange because we don't associate that term with salvation. He says, 'Buy from Me, buy from Me.' So, it's not talking about salvation as in salvation. It's talking about the second part, so we have to be very, very, careful about it. Very, very, careful because in verse 33 He says, He demands total undivided commitment, total undivided commitment.

Now let me put a statutory warning over there in the strength of Scripture. The calling of God, okay, other than salvation, the secondary call of God right from the beginning, to the end of the Bible is always to men, the women are called only in supportive role. No women in the Bible have ever been called by God because then He would be breaking His own order, because if He calls the woman the basic unit, which is called the home, will fall apart. We say five-fold calling their apostles, prophet, evangelists, pastors, teachers, where do they come from? Homes, they come from homes. In eternity inheritance all that will be different, but on earth be very, very, careful because God will not break His own order. Because it will cost the breakdown of the home, if you have doubts just read one verse, we won't go through all of Scripture, just a couple. So Luke 14 and verse 26.

Luke 14:26

²⁶ ***"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.***

He doesn't say, 'Husband.' He doesn't say, 'Husband,' He says, 'Wife,' and He's never interested about culture and He's not going to be politically correct, Jesus was never into any of these things. And when you talk about leadership in the church, you read Titus, Timothy everywhere it says, 'The elder of one wife,' it doesn't say the wife of one husband, doesn't say that. It doesn't say that. So ladies be very, very, careful because there are a lot of, all the unmarried young girls put your hands up, Sarah, you're still unmarried Okay. All the young ones who are not married your prayer life should be, 'Lord in whose life am I supposed to be the help mate?' The men should be asking, 'Lord, what's my purpose?' It's in this context in *1 Timothy 2:12*,

1 Timothy 2:12-14

¹² And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. ¹³ For Adam was formed first, then Eve. ¹⁴ And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

I do not permit a man woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. And he goes right back to the beginning. Whenever Jesus was asked questions, He always went to the beginning. I keep telling pastors everywhere, you study Genesis 1 and 2 you'll understand everything, what I should be post salvation. You read 1 and 2 it's all there. ***For Adam was formed first then Eve, and Adam was not deceived but the woman being deceived fell into transgression,*** then he puts it, what is the role of the woman in all of this? There were prayers prayer requests today about wives children and all in verse 15,

1 Timothy 2:15

¹⁵ Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.

This (childbearing) is what is given to her, you can put it as childbearing, or child rearing our home, home. And you look through the Word of God you will realize, if one generation does not follow, you will realize there was something wrong, if there is a Samuel you can give all the credit to Hannah. That mother raised that boy to be a servant of God. But if Moses children did not follow after the father or the father's God, you can put it on Zipporah. She was a rebel right from the beginning. If Samuel's children did not serve the Lord as the father did, you will realize there was a problem with the mother. We are picking up men who are godly and then wonder, 'What happened to their children?' Because transition didn't take place though He's the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

So sisters, please get this very, very, clear because as far as God is concerned, God is concerned, you study Scripture *Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 20 to 21*. He's interested only in two entities, one is called the family, the other is called His Bride. He's not interested in anything else. You go to college, He's not interested in colleges, you go to school study well, He is not interested in school, offices, organizations, He's not interested in anything. If you go to school He will look and say, 'My child is at school,' that's all He's interested in, not in the school. He's interested only two things: one is called 'the Family,' because He's a Father, the other is called 'the Church' which is His Bride, because Christ is the Bridegroom. He's not interested in anything else. So what we highly esteem God consider it useless. What He's interested in is what are you becoming there? That's all He's interested in. So don't waste your life like I did for many years because I wouldn't go to God and ask Him, like this man did, Acts chapter 9 verse 6

Acts 9:6

⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

He saw Apostle Paul trembling, astonished, said Lord, 'What do You want me to do?' What a simple question, right? Have you really, trembling, astonished, once you understand the awesomeness of salvation, 'Wow! This is what salvation is, the awesomeness of salvation, fall on your knees and say, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' It will be told you. But it's never told to anyone who has not surrendered, God doesn't waste words. He doesn't play dice, He knows in this case this man's surrender was absolutely there from day one. So many people took years. I took years to come to that point where I would surrender, because I had my plans, I had my plans, most Christians do not ask this question, either because they are disinterested, or they are scared or they already have their plans, they know what they want to do. But post salvation, this is the most important question you should ask - what do you want me to do? Ephesians 2:10 again brings eternity into the picture.

Ephesians 2:10

¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus. When? For good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. When did He prepare that? In eternity. Eternity, He has prepared it all in eternity what we should do. It's Mark Twain who said, 'The two most important days in the life of every man is the day you were born, and the day you discover why.' Now let me tell each one of you, almost always if you read Scripture carefully, when you discover your purpose, you will discover two things; one, you will discover that was never your intention to be, second, you discover for that you had absolutely no ability to be. That's when you know your call is genuine, call is genuine. One, that's one thing you never wanted to be. Meaning, not just not wanted but you never even thought about it, never crossed your mind, if it crossed your mind you conveniently rejected it, 'Get away from me Satan,' you told. And second thing, you had absolutely all the reasons to say 'no', because you know neither were you inclined nor were you equipped for that equipped for that. Absolutely not equipped for that. Why is that? It is because the purpose of God to be fulfilled is entirely dependent upon a Person and His power, both. A Person and His power. About Jesus Himself it is written in Acts 10 and verse 38,

Acts 10:38

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth first, with the person the Holy Spirit, and with power, then He went up doing what He was prepared to do, beforehand prepared to do. There's a person, and there is His power. Be careful about it, I'm telling you warning you from the pulpit, especially pastors who are listening. There are many people who took the Person (God) as a business partner. You know there are business marriages, lot of people in US they cross, they get married just to get the paperwork, it's called a business marriage and after two years when they get back paper, they're conveniently divorcing, we knew it was a business marriage. That's why when they scrutinize and they ask you so many questions and all because there are a lot of business marriages, the purpose is different, the purpose is very different. What do I want? I want a green card, that's the purpose. So are you a US citizen? 'Yes.' Will you marry me? 'How much will you give me? And how long?' They have a business agreement. There are a lot of people for whom the Holy Spirit is a business partner; using His power they will run their ministries, be very careful, He's a Person. And all of our problems are with Him, like I said on Friday. Christ is the Lord over the Church, the Holy Spirit is the Lord in the Church, in the Church.

And Jesus said two things, "He will be in you, He will be with you." And when you try to treat Him as a business partner the One who is with you leaves, the One who is in you remains. Then you operate on a gift, but sometimes people realize it only many years down the line. Like I keep telling, time doesn't do anything, it's a non-entity, non-living entity, your clock may go, 'tick tick tick', but it has no life, if you have doubts take the battery out. Time doesn't do anything, it just reveals, time reveals, it's a great reveler. That's why we go to the Word of God and we go to the Spirit of God, because they never lie to us, they never ever lie to us. And you can go to the bank with them and time will actually reveal that they were right, they were right. It is the work of grace and grace alone and no man will boast, in Old Testament and New Testament completely. Zachariah 4:6 and 4:7 says this,

Zachariah 4:6-7

⁶ So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.⁷ 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' "

This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel not by might not by power, that's our human strengths, abilities, knowledge, wisdom, power, money, influence, but by My Spirit says the Lord of hosts, but how will He complete the work? Verse 7. Who are you great mountain? Before the Zerubbabel you shall become a plane and he shall bring for the capstone, the finishing - cornerstone to capstone, with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" If it is you it's not grace, if it is Him it can

only be grace and if it is grace it is only possible by faith. You cannot access grace without faith. If you have doubts read *Romans 5:2*. So it doesn't matter whether it is Jesus or Moses, Exodus 4:20,

Exodus 4:20

²⁰ Then Moses took his wife and his sons and set them on a donkey, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took the rod of God in his hand.

And Moses took something in his hand; he was entirely dependent upon a stick, entirely dependent. His own staff when he laid it before God had become the rod of God. You take that rod out Moses will be destroyed in Egypt. So at the end he will realize, it was by grace and grace alone. Are you getting the picture? Because in the human thinking, the way the world is framed, right? We have it in our Indian culture, right during the puja season the little child they will put a sword over there, they will put a book over there, they will put this thing and allow the baby to crawl and to whichever the baby goes and pick and says, 'That is his career.' Now don't laugh at the Hindu, because you did the same thing different way only. God doesn't do stuff like that. Do you know, when Moses was chosen, the difference between the calling and the choosing? When he was called, Act 7:22,

Acts 7:22

²² And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians was mighty in words and deeds. There he stood with the sword in his hand, God drove him into the wilderness. Forty years later no wisdom, no deeds, no speech, absolutely incapable and God said, 'I picked you, I picked you.' The world doesn't work that way, try putting in a resume like that and see which company will hire you, real or inflated resumes people give. That's why I said that the Kingdom of God is inverted, it is not like the kingdom of the world. That's why when you think, 'This is what I am good at, this is what I am excellent at, this is what God is calling me to do,' He will not call you, because you're too good at it, you don't need Him or His Spirit, you won't listen to Him.

First, you won't listen to the Person. Second, you will try to do it in your own power. I don't want to use other people's life so that they get don't get offended. So I will use my own life because I am not offended, like I said I grew up in another country, and there were three languages that were used: Malayalam at home, English at school, and then Nepali with the students in between school. So here was a kid who grew up, he didn't know Malayalam grammar, he didn't know English grammar, he didn't know Nepali grammar. I tell my stories and my wife laughs. I said, 'When I used to sit in the kitchen and read, my mother used to make me sit while she's making dinner. She would say, 'Sit there and read your English text,' and I would read ISLAND 'is land' my mother used to laugh, 'What are you reading!!?!?' I could read after a season, I could read well but I couldn't speak. One thing I couldn't do is that I couldn't speak. That's why if you don't notice I still notice that when I speak I still make mistakes and I laugh at myself. You don't notice, I notice the grammatical errors I still make in English okay.

So that I should know that this was not of me. So here am I, at the age of 12, landed up in God's own country now, then it was 'no man's land' for me. Absolutely bullied in school because I was the only kid in school who couldn't speak the mother tongue, broken, couldn't speak English properly and Nepali of course nobody spoke. I struggled, I kept my mouth shut, I had enormous stage fright I never spoke in public, actually I remember one day when I was with my one of my elder brothers in Trivandrum, I had gone over then he was with me and his friend was going to meet his friend or girlfriend or somebody and he whispered to me, 'When I am with her don't open your mouth and speak. You embarrass us, I don't want to say that you are not my brother.' That was me okay. No intention of call, serving God, nothing. That never crossed my mind okay. Then I get saved, when you get saved and when you finish your PG all you want is desperately you want a job. Everybody wants one. I don't know, are you desperate for a job? At 22, I was desperate for a job. And I remember I went to a type writing institute, typed out my resume and sent it to the only place I knew, which was the country where I grew up. I wrote 'To the Director of education, department of education, Thimpu,' and sent it.

Two weeks later at my home I get, what is we call it, WT which is (Wireless Telegram), I get a telegram – 'appear for interview immediately.' I go over there, I am telling you, this dude has never spoken, what are you going to do? Teach. Of course interview was all written, all cleared everything, Shakespeare and all, not a problem, then I'm selected, I

haven't reached 23, they needed my certificate, my result hasn't come, I can still remember, the result hasn't come. I go to the university and ask for a provisional certificate which they won't give it to you, it has to be to be delivered to your employers, so I gave the Institution head's name and my certificate reached there, provisional. So here I am first day in the classroom, trembling, trembling, never have I spoken in my life, trembling, and I had to teach Shakespeare of all things, I somehow managed. It was not easy because some of my students were older than me, when they were sitting. I was sharing with some kids I said that, that's when I first realized in the secular place, the Holy Spirit is a Person and He is there for you. I was struggling with the students because once they know that you are young, you are a rookie, you are struggling, they bully you and the worst class you can get is the first hour after lunch, worst, worst class after lunch.

So there is all this dhadhas sitting with their head down, sleeping, and I get in, they all get up and say, 'Good afternoon sir' "Kuzu zangpo la" in their language, none of them get up. The few, few, not all of them, some of the timid girls were smiling at me with sympathy, 'Sir, what can we do? These guys are like this.' I said Lord, 'I need You, Lord I need You.' I don't know what happened, something came upon me, I just shut my text, and I started teaching Shakespeare. I knew it was the anointing because one got up, another got up, another got up, another got up, before you knew all of them are listening to Shakespeare intently under the anointing. After that I never had trouble with my students, never. Everything changed that day, that's when I realized I was called to speak. One thing I could never do, never do, it was divinely given. If you have doubts let me ask you this question - how can a man live in a city called Hyderabad, in Telangana for almost 25 years, and cannot speak one sentence of Telugu because that is not his gift, that is not his gift; that is not my strength. So He called me where I was weakest.

That's how you will know, that's how you will know, that's why we say in English, 'He doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies those who are called.' Okay. So please understand, that's how it works, that's how it works. So when you think about call, when you think about purpose, and all, you need to realize. Because our mind is always in the way of the world, we will say, 'Lord, I'm sure God is calling me to this because this is what I've been trained, this is my strength.' Let me ask you Moses strength was to speak and to lead an army, but he was called to be a shepherd. David's strength was to lead a flock, but he was called to lead an army. You're not called where you are strong, you're not. Take this thing seriously because we are coming to the end of the year, end of the year, because when you go before God and say, 'Here I am, here I am.' You do not know what it means, which way He will use you. Let Him show you, you never have to be scared because when you go to an interview, what they ask is - tell us how can you be good for this position? Tell us your strengths.' But when you go to God, you actually go to Him by saying, 'I am weak, I just can't do this, I don't even know why You call me, because I looked to the left and the right everybody seems to be better than me. Why did You call me?' It doesn't work that way in the Kingdom of God. In Matthew 16 and verse 24 and 25

Matthew 16:24-25

²⁴Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

hen Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, that's the first thing. But the question is - How do you deny yourself? Because you know what actually happened, if you listen, if you remember the messages in the past, what happened when Adam ate from the tree? His self came in, self came in. What happened is man became independent of God, because now he has eaten, 'I don't need God, I have knowledge, I've eaten I have knowledge,' and honestly if you look at it the more you get educated, the more difficult it becomes for God to move you, to speak to you, because you're making your own choices because your self has become strong because of knowledge. Honestly, that's why I like going to the countryside and speaking to them, because you don't struggle there, you don't struggle with them, because they don't have much knowledge, but they have much faith. And God says in His word that He has made the poor in this world rich in faith.

Okay, so what happened is that when man fell he became self-conscious. If you read the verses before the fall and after the fall Adam and Eve were naked and they were not ashamed, why? Because they were not self-conscious. As soon as they sinned, they became self-conscious, first thing is they were ashamed, they tried to cover themselves up. Second thing when God came they hid and said, 'I was afraid.' The first response of being self is either shame or fear. I'll prove to you, that's a baby at the back, a little one at the back, she's just a couple of months old, you can strip her she has no

shame, because she's not self-conscious, no shame, she may cry if you make a loud noise, that doesn't mean she's scared, you go before her and do all these faces, she doesn't know what fear is, because she's not self-conscious. You know what we do, we make her conscious as she grows about shame and about fear, good and bad, and then comes all the other things that propels self, self.

And God comes and says, Now you're saved. For once you humbled yourself and received the gift of salvation, stop trying to save yourself by your works, you believed in the Blood. Now if you want to become a disciple,' He says, 'deny yourself, deny yours elf.' It's not easy, it's not easy.

Judges 6:15

¹⁵ So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

He said to Him, 'O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, I am the least in my father's house.' It is absolutely conscious statement, the situation in that country under the oppression of the Midianites has brought him down to his knees, where he actually now believes, 'My clan is the smallest and my house is the smallest and I am the smallest.' Until you come to the point, where you are truly aware of your littleness, you cannot become a disciple.

That's what I said, 6 days in the world, everybody is propelling you up up up up up, self is being pumped and pumped and pumped and pumped and then like big balloons they come to Church on Sunday and pastor goes with a pin and pricks everyone. People get upset, 'Can't you see something good?' What I'm telling you is good. He had to come to this point, come to this point. Now he's ready, absolutely conscious about his littleness. Go to 1 Samuel chapter 24 and verse 14

1 Samuel 24:14

¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel come out? Whom do you pursue? A dead dog? A flea?

After whom the king of Israel has come out? Whom do you pursue? David is asking Saul, 'Why are you wasting your time and energy and resources on me? Am I worth it? Who am I? A dead dog, a flea on the dog's head. Did you realize why he became a man after Gods own heart? What he recognizes is his littleness, he says, 'I'm not worth your time.' Think about it, I give you practical examples of that. You go for a doctor's appointment, an appointment was for 10:15. But already it is 45 minutes late, you start getting upset. Do you know why? it is because you still haven't thought about yourself as a little. It's not that he's wasting my time. Any situation like this. Wait! Okay. Do you remember James chapter 1 verse 2 and 3?

James 1:2-3

²My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

Brethren conspirator has joy when you go through various trials when you fall into knowing that the testing of your faith, what produces what? Produces patience. Behind every process there is a product. Otherwise there is no process. The question is, you say, 'I'm walking in faith,' but my question is - have you become patient? Because the first product of faith is patience; you realize, 'I am nobody. I need to wait for God to move.' Saul moved, he was impatient and the kingdom was taken away from him and God comes and says, 'When you were little in your own eyes, wasn't then when you became king, you were chosen. Now you have become big, become big. Aware of our own littleness, not just in words, practically. Gideon had to reach that point, David reached that point, look at Jesus. Of all people, Jesus, in John chapter 5 verse 30.

John 5:30

³⁰ I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

I can of Myself do nothing. Now, honestly, how many of you believe that about yourself? Now he's talking about what God has called Him for, "I cannot do it, I can't do nothing about it, absolutely nothing about it." So when I'm talking about the second call; the purpose, be very sure you can of yourself do nothing, absolutely nothing. If you can, then it is not of God, it is not of grace, it is not of the Holy Spirit. This is God's own Son saying, - "I can of Myself do nothing." You know what He denied Himself to follow His Father. And He will never ask us to do something which He didn't do Himself, "I can do nothing of Myself." You know where it is visible? It is visible, actually visible, I mean, this is all your own personal life okay, so you you're not showing it to anybody, you are judging yourself, today will come to communion, and the Bible says, 'He who judges himself will not be judged with the world,' meaning, I don't know somebody will take it and run with, that's not what you thought it meant. It means that constantly ask the Word and the Spirit to show you. Okay, Acts 6, verse 4, these are the apostles,

Acts 6:4

⁴ but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Something changed post Pentecost - *'we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word,'* prayer and the ministry of the Word. What did they mean by that? These two things will determine, you can check yourself, we know in 2 Timothy 3:16 the Bible says,

2 Timothy 3:16

¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

All Scripture is God breathed, what does it mean? The entire, I like this illustration by a man of God; he says the entire Word of God is only 66 books. It's like a piano, black keys and white keys, white and black, but if the Holy Spirit doesn't come it's very limited. But he says take a piano and take this and put an accomplished pianist behind it, the possibilities of what he can create are infinite, without the Holy Spirit you will never understand the Word, never understand the Word. So in your Word life you're entirely dependent upon the person who is the Lord in the Church. It's not from much studying. Solomon tried it and said, 'It only brought weariness.' Much study? No, it is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God. If you go to Romans 8 and verse 26 and 27

Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

What does it mean? We don't know what to pray for, and we don't know what we ought to pray, and how to pray. Let me ask this question - Is that true? That's why I said, 'This is a secret life, this is your personal life.' Are you dependent upon this Person, Who is in us and with us, for your Word life? 'Lord, if You don't show me I will not understand. If You don't speak, I don't understand. What I understand is not what You're trying to tell me. I'm just a rookie sitting behind a piano making a cacophony. But when You come this 66 books changes. And then when it comes to your prayer life, our prayer lives, we hear it often, are shopping lists. We know what we want, we just want, 'in Jesus' name. Amen. Please answer it.' But that's not what prayer life is.

We don't know what we should pray for, we don't know how to pray for it. Let me ask you this - do we sense this weakness? Do we sense this weakness when we approach the Word of God? Do we sense this weakness when we go to pray, and you say, 'Spirit of God, I don't know what to pray for'? And the Bible says that the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the heart knows what the mind of the Spirit is because He makes intercession for the saints, according to the will of God.

So ask these two questions, two primary questions in a believer's life; one is the Word, the other is the prayer - how much is the Spirit of God in control? How much are you dependent upon the Spirit of God? That's why when I go to places and in the Pastors' Conference, when I tell them, look at Jesus prayer life. And I show them portions which they have never seen, they've never seen, about Scripture they have never seen. *Psalm 138:2*, I remember in Kathmandu in a

Pastors' Conference there were so many pastors from all over and I showed them, 'Do you know what Psalm 138:2 is? They knew the Psalm but they didn't know what it meant and they looked at it and they were shocked.

Psalm 138:2

² I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.

And I said, 'In your language the translation is wrong, the correct translation is this and in English it is correct. It says, you know what? ***I have magnified My Word Above all My Name.*** Did you see that? For Your name, You have magnified Your Word above all Your Name. Let me ask this question - how do we pray? 'In Your Name', but did you magnify the Word? Did we ask the Spirit of God to show us what this means? We have our dreams, we have our ambitions, we have all these things. But did we ever go to God and say, 'What do You want me to do with my life? After all it is Your life, not my life,' because the Bible says that we were bought with a price, your body is not your own anymore, it's His. Do we understand? Judges 6, 14 we read 15

Judges 6:14

¹⁴ Then the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?"

A question - go in this might of yours. What is 'your might'? What is that?

Judges 6:15

¹⁵ So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house."

I am my clan is the weakest, I am the least in my father's house. What is the might? Your littleness is your strength in the eyes of God. Will the world ever receive that? That's enough; that was what I was waiting for. Moses said, 'I cannot speak, I cannot do. Send somebody.' God said, 'You can.' 'But I can't!' 'What is in your hand?' 'This rod.' He said, 'That's enough, I'll bring My people out with that. You are ready now because you are little. You were not ready 40 years ago because you were big, you were called, but you couldn't be chosen because you were big.'

Now what is little is, mighty in God's eyes. Go in that might, go in that might. What is that your littleness? Is that true? I'll prove to you from Scripture. Go to 1 Corinthians chapter one and verse 26

1 Corinthians 1:26

²⁶ For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

For you see your calling. Do you see you're calling? Do you see your calling? Do you see the state in which each one has to become before they can be called? ***That not many wise according to the flesh,*** meaning according to world system, ***not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God has chosen*** what? ***The foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty, and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen and the things which are not to bring to nothing the things that are.***

Did you see the called and the chosen. That's why even Jesus to be chosen the Bible says, 'He made Himself of no reputation,' other translations will say, 'He emptied Himself,' before His Father could choose Him. At 30 the Father said, ***'This is My Son in whom I am well pleased,'*** completely empty. Therefore you will struggle when you come to the church. Or if you go to a fake church they will tell you exactly what the world says and you feel so good, 'Brother, you are the one God has chosen. Brother you have this gift and receive two more, and brother prosper, brother to the left, to the right, to the center everything they will say. And you are tickled-pink without realizing that's not Scripture. You're not even ready to be called because you're too big in your own eyes, you're putting your trust in your strengths and you

want God to anoint your strength and not your weakness, not your weakness, not your weakness. That is Jesus, then in Judges 6:16, this is what God says,

Judges 6:16

¹⁶ And the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

And the Lord said to him, 'Surely I will be with you, I will be with you, because you are so little, so little. I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites.'

See we sing all these songs but the fact is - is it true? We sing 'Give thanks,' why should we give thanks? Because when I am weak then I am strong. Are we? When I am poor, then I am rich. But God says, 'You're singing it's not true, I have been trying for years to make you weak, but you are still too strong.' Because the entire modern education system, system, entire modern education system is propping up self. That's why that child probably may get a fellowship, and if you ask that child only two people, only two people to whom everybody, she said, 'Only two people said something that was contrary, one was from mother who said, 'If you go to America I will slap you,' other was me, I said, 'Child, don't put your dreams for America. Even if you get be careful.'

See somebody gets an admission in a MIT immediately we get so excited, why? Because our mind hasn't changed yet, it hasn't changed yet. AIMS or CMC I am not saying per say in itself these things are bad institutions, they are good institutions, but ask what did it do to you? Why are you so happy? I promise you that most of the parents, who have come and dedicated their boys and their daughters, haven't honestly gone on their knees, and told the Lord, 'My boy, You want to call him to serve You all his life, here He is,' or 'my daughter, my prayer is that she'll grow up and become a helpmate to a pastor, let her be.' They wouldn't dare to do that until their self dies. Because they have their own dreams, it's all connected with the world, all connected with the world.

Now, you know why we struggle? You see, a man like Paul didn't need much teaching because surrender was there and God could teach him personally. By the time he reached Corinthians 15 he says, 'I was born out of time strangely, I was the worst of sinners, least of the apostles, by God's grace I overshot all of them.' And if you ask what was the reason? The reason was this man was absolutely totally surrendered. It is not easy because after the fall what happened is self, it is not sin which is the issue, it is not the devil which is the issue, it is not the world which is the issue; you can overcome Satan, you can overcome the world, and you can live a life without sin and never deny yourself, and still be disqualified in God's eyes, because the enemy is 'self'. And Jesus doesn't talk about sin, Satan, world or any of these things. He says, 'I saw Satan fall like a lightning. Don't worry about the world because I have overcome the world.' He says, 'You want to come after Me the first thing you need to do is deny yourself.' And I am telling you, it is not easy because I was somebody who struggled with it, because this was what not what I never even dreamt to be, this was not what I was prepared to be. It was something else all together.

Then you understand your vision very clearly. What are you called? Why is God with you? To defeat the Midianites, and to rescue the Israelite. That's the purpose of my life - To fight the powers of darkness and be a vessel in the hands of God in whichever format He uses to bring people out of darkness into the light. Whatever your contribution is, not necessarily preaching, but you realize that is it. For a mother it could be entirely connected with raising up a child, entirely. That's what I told in Karakpur to the mothers, 'All of you are struggling, everybody after each meeting will say, 'Pray for this son, pray for that one, pray for this one; this one doesn't study, this one doesn't.' I said do you remember what Rebecca did? She conceived, there was something going on, she went to God and said, 'Lord, what is happening?' God told her, 'There are two nations in your womb, the elder shall serve the younger.' As soon as she heard, and she's a mother, and mothers are not like fathers, fathers love children according to accomplishment, mothers just love their children. And the Bible says that as soon as they were born Jacob came second and she put Jacob aside, and kept him with her because she realized there is one child who has a purpose, one child who has a purpose, I love them both but the younger one is called and till the end she's fighting for his call. We'll have issues with how she did it, but you cannot neglect the fact she's still fighting for Jacob's call, that could be yours, once you surrender and say, 'Lord here I am, here I am.' And if you turn to Judges because Gideon's, that episode in Judges, is very powerful.

Judges 6:25-26

²⁵ Now it came to pass the same night that the LORD said to him, "Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that is beside it; ²⁶ and build an altar to the LORD your God on top of this rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image which you shall cut down."

Then it came to pass the same night the Lord said to him take your father's young bull the second bull of seven years and tear down the altar of Baal. And the next thing you have to do is ask God to show the idols in my heart and tear it down, because we end up worshiping our idols, and it doesn't matter, you can enjoy sports, you can enjoy music, but after a point it becomes idolatry. That's why I said I share my testimony I was a kid who grew up reading, reading, reading, reading, reading except the Bible everything else, everything else. I didn't get a hand on the Quran, I read it much later, but, all the Hindu scriptures Mahabharata, Ramayana I just read, tens and thousands, until one day I had to make a decision, that's the day I left my PhD. I had to pick up this (the Bible) and only books connected with the Word of God and give up the others. It was not an easy decision because you asked me when was the last time I went to a bookstore. I haven't gone because I cannot go, because I'll end up buying. Every time we came down from those mountain towns the first thing we checked into hotel my father used to take my hand and say, 'Come with me,' because he knew and we go to the Higgins Patterson and he would say, 'Pick your books,' that was the gift for me, I would pick a huge pile and say, 'All this.' The thing is that before the train reached Kerala I had finished them all and then started all over again, that was my life, but I threw them all out, every one of them out. I don't read anymore. Only the Bible and books connected with it. It was not easy, because that was my idol.

The second thing that was my idol was Hindi music, movie music, I grew up on that, all forms, all forms and this time in those four days in Kharapur, Calcutta, the festivals were going on and my room at 10 in the morning it starts goes till 11 and every song they were singing I knew, I was telling pastor Vijay and I think it is one of those meetings I said, '30 years ago, 35 years ago, if you had met me you would know I could sing. Bhutan's best playback singer is Di Chanpeh, my student and she and I used to sit in the basketball court with the students and sing Hindi duets, but I don't sing anymore, I don't sing I just whistle because that was my idol.' Asked my wife after I came from Kharapur. She doesn't know the songs, I'm only whistling Hindi movie songs which I've been in my head for three days. She doesn't know, thank God she doesn't know any Hindi songs. These are idols. You have to go and pull it down doesn't matter how old they are how much you have indulged in the how much you love them, because until you pulled it down, in verse 26 he says, 'Build up another altar, and build an altar to the Lord your God.'

We are trying to build both side by side. Children, it is not possible, it is not possible. 'I want my career, I want to serve God.' God says, 'Sorry, it doesn't work. I will choose for you. You surrender your career to Me, I may give you something better or something completely different.' First you have to pull down, only then can you build another. We know that's what Christ says in Ephesians - **put off and put on**, put off and put on. We'll go to the Communion Table.

But we're coming close to the end of the year and years and all are decided by us calendars and all, but remember time is passing by, time is passing by. Like I said time doesn't do anything except reveal, either we get hardened or we get more and more meek towards God. One of these two things. People who have learned the discipline of surrendering to God every day, their lives are becoming, inside, that's what Paul is saying - "Though the outer man is perishing the inward man is being renewed, being renewed."

Church, I am telling you, we need to hear what the Spirit says, only He can prepare us for what is coming, and bring us through it all without shaking, because everything that can be shaken, Jesus said, will be shaken and is being shaken. If we are not shaken it will be only because we have bent our knee and accepted the lordship, personally the lordship of God's personal representative to each one - His Spirit, as Jesus did, as Jesus did. You look at Jesus life, what He did, how did He do it? He was entirely submitted to the lordship of the Holy Spirit. And if you don't, it doesn't mean you are unsaved or you are not saved, but when the end comes and we stand before God we will realize, 'but Lord I did so much,' He will say, 'Yeah, you did what you wanted to do in My name. You really, really, never sought Me, you really, really, never surrendered for Me, you never became little in your own eyes for Me to tell you, to tell you what I wanted you to do.'

As we come to the Table, Pastor Vijay, worship team, elders, let's go to the Table. The Table means so many, so many things, it represents the Person who was so completely surrendered to the will of God, that in the Garden of Gethsemane He was literally sweating blood, and the writer of Hebrews in chapter 12 says - *in your battle against sin you have not yet come to the shedding of blood.* Battle against self, try it tonight, and try it every day, 'Lord, here I am I take my hands off,' and you will realize it is not easy, it's not easy.

Let this communion service be your service for your surrender. Let it be you own song, you own prayer, 'Lord I come to You.'

"For I received from the Lord, that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the same night, on which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks He broke it and said, "Take, eat this is My body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant in My Blood, this do as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lords death till He comes."

Father once again we come to Your table, You said do this in remembrance of Me, You were the only Man who walked on earth, who from the beginning till the end, absolutely totally denied Himself and was surrendered totally to the will of His Father, and the result of it is this Table; the emblems of Your sacrifice, the Body that hung on the Cross for us, selfish creatures, and the Blood that is shed for the remission of our sins. We thank You Jesus, we thank You, we just thank You. All we can say is thank You, thank You, thank You Lord. As we partake of this today, redeem us even more, deliver us even more, set us free from self that we may serve You. Thank You Father. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Please keep the emblem in your hand at the end we shall part take together.

Shall we part take of the bread the emblem of His body hung on the Cross for us, shall we drink from the cup the emblem of His blood that was shed for the remission of our sins.

If you there for the teaching in the book of Revelation you will see, in every dispensation, and in every one of those churches, God was looking for overcomers, and one thing is repeated to all the seven churches - **he who overcomes**. If you study God's pattern in the Bible, Old and New, it always begins with a man, who has become little, who has become little. Even Abraham, he was led from the Ur of the Chaldeans, but what was he led for? All the promises mean nothing, these are all comparative terms, I'll make your name mighty, I will make you rich and all these means nothing, because he's already got a name and riches. Then why did he leave? Because there was one thing he did not have, he did not have a child, that was part of the promise, that's why in *Genesis 15* when God says, '**I will be your Shield and exceedingly great Reward,**' his immediate response is, 'What's the point? I don't have a child, I don't have a child.'

But God cannot come and speak to him and fulfill that promise until Abraham is absolutely dead, and Sarah is dead; they are little in their own eyes. Then God says, "*At My set time next year your wife will have a baby.*" Even with Abraham God had to wait, 25 years in the Promised Land maybe much more, after the first call. If he was called in the Ur, at the age of 60, that means God waited 45 years, to fulfill the purpose for which Abraham was called, because at 100 he became little. Every one of them, every one of them, every one of us, because the world teaches you to become big, big; bigger the best, become smart, smarter, dog eat dog, climb the ladder, push the ones below, kick them, break their teeth. You saw election season is over, for power what all promises on one side, what all abuses on other side. Here is the God who comes even to the most lethargy, literally useless church and He said, '*If you overcome as I overcame you will sit at My throne and reign in eternity.*' His heart is always looking for somebody who's little, little. In some ages when He's desperate He will use anybody He finds available, but that is not His norm.

Judges 6:34

³⁴ But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him.

Finally when Gideon has become what He wants him to be, the Bible says - **The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon** then he blew the trumpet, then the people gathered, that's God's format - first you become little, you're little and little then God speaks to you and says, 'I have chosen you.' Then when the Spirit of the Lord comes, you speak, then people

gather. ***'The Spirit of the Lord has anointed Me,'*** Who's this? Jesus. Has format changed anywhere? From Gideon to Jesus it's the same, it's never different. So how do you and I think we can do something without His Spirit? It's impossible, how do you think you and I can experience freedom and liberty in our lives or marriages or homes until you turn to Him? Because the Bible says, 'He is the Lord.' When you turn to the Lord the veil is lifted, because I said, the Holy Spirit is a Lord in the Church. And where He is Lord, then you acknowledge His lordship, as you keep acknowledging His lordship you experience liberty and the liberty has got nothing to do with this world, and the situation you are in, it's a liberty that comes from within, given by God Himself and the Bible says that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Him and He blew the trumpet, and so many gathered.

As we close, final verse,

Judges 7:2

² And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'

The Lord said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many, for Me, not for you, but for Me." You may think, 'Lord, this is too little.' God says, 'It's too little for you, but it's too many for Me. Get rid of some more.' See, things don't work like we think. I said, unless God opens our eyes and He starts showing. We will learn that our math was wrong, our physics was wrong. Like, if Jesus walked on water and Peter walked on water, physics was wrong. Physics was wrong, and then when you had five loaves and two fish, how many did you feed? Five thousand, when He had seven loaves and two fish, how many did He feed? Four thousand. Now, your math is also wrong, until God. We understand science to a point yes, because we will say math is an exact science, and then you go into the Scripture, you realize it is not so exact.

You see when it comes to holiness and righteousness, it's a different matter, when it comes to other things God is not bound by it. Now let me ask you this question - by what laws of science did He make water into wine? How is it possible? What law is that? There is no law, if it was law everybody would be turning water into wine. But there's no such law. So how did He do it? That is why the Bible says that any man who comes to God must first believe that He is. He is what He says He is. So the sifting begins. God says, 'The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself.' Yourself will go up.

Because I deal this with pastors, right, I look at pastor, there was one pastor in Kharagpur. My gosh! He was such a nice gentle, meek person, you know, such a nice person and he was telling me, 'I was mentored as a young man by two Malayali professors from IIT kharagpur. They brought me to the Lord.' He was so, so humble, so meek, I don't want to say the things which he said to me, because then I would be lifting myself. But you need to realize I tell them, okay, 'Don't look at numbers, it means nothing, okay.' How do you judge numbers, wealth, how great your worship team is, how great the preaching is? None of these things really matter. None of these things really matter. Leave it for that day, everything will be revealed on that day. It's too much, too much.

And then the sifting will begin. You need to realize and all who will be called to discover your purpose, one day when you discover your purpose, and then the process, and when your day comes in, the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you, you will speak or do something and people will gather around you. And then listen carefully to what He is saying, 'There are too many, too many. I am going to sift them. I am going to sift them. And sometimes it's just a personal thing - how does God sift you? The first thing He says is, 'All those who are afraid tell them to leave.' And we were studying on it. If you chronologically go through the Gospel according to Matthew and then go to the word 'little faith' first thing is worry. He will sift you and He will tell you, 'Stop worrying,' because what worry does is it makes your faith little. Why do you worry, you of little faith? You have forgot who your Father is?'

During the storm He rebuked it and then He looked at them said, 'Why did you fear? You of little faith.' What did fear do? The sifting has begun. He's sifting us, He's sifting each one and says, 'Deal with these issues.' These are the issues that displeases God, because your faith comes down, you displease God because it's possible only to please God with faith. I was telling the Church, God doesn't say that without holiness you cannot please God. No. Without faith you will not see Him. But when it comes to pleasing Him only one thing is mentioned - it is faith. Because if you don't trust God, you don't please Him. Because every relationship, the core of it is entirely built on trust, trust. We love our children, but

we don't trust them until they earn their trust. When we go to God and say, 'I don't trust You,' the relationship is broken down. So we have to consciously attack those things that kill trust. And God says, 'Deal with worry, deal with worry, deal with fear. Peter sinks, He pulls him and asks, 'Why did you doubt? You of little faith, why did you doubt?'

'Beware of the leaven of the Herodians,' immediately, 'Why do you reason? You of little faith.' Is it possible to put your intellectual cap away and read this Bible without reason? Because reasoning will bring in fear and doubt. That's why they don't believe in miracles anymore because you know why they put it in the cap of reasoning, as if God has changed. You go into difficult places, somebody wrote to me today from a difficult place, on WhatsApp. She wrote to me, pastor's wife, I mentored her online from Israel, got her through all the marriage counseling, married a pastor, now she's ministering, she said, 'Pastor, pray for us, one lame child in our ministry got healed, blind child started seeing and now trouble has started. Trouble has started.' Of course, with miracles come trouble, be prepared. But your faith has to be strong. Why do you doubt? Why do you reason?

So this morning let us stand up. First Sunday, we are recapping the whole year, and each time we here we realize we have much to repent of, because ultimately all these things will eat away your faith and finally you will come to this stage which is called the evil heart of unbelief that departs from the living God. Begins with a little worry, then you mix fear, then you doubt, then you reason, ultimately you reach here, and you depart from the living God. We won't reach there, I don't believe anyone will reach there, but I will keep you on your toes, because our God is real, He is living, He is awesome, He is awesome. I still remember a letter from a prison in New York, this was a person who had lost the voice and hadn't spoken for years, and was given one of our old messages and in that message I had shared the same testimony which I shared with you today. And when they were listening and the person said, 'Oh that pastor in India, he never spoke, he was very fearful, he never did but then when God allowed him to speak. He speaks and he speaks fluently today. If God can do it with him, He can do it with me.' The mouth open and he started speaking, just like that he started speaking. Because He hasn't changed, He is still the same. If you believe, all things, within the parameters of His purpose, are possible. Don't make all things as all things, no. You wouldn't want all things.

Shall we pray?

Closing prayer:

Father this morning, we come to You, we just want to thank You Lord, we just want to thank You, thank You, thank You Lord. Faithful God, awesome God, with our little understanding we say there is no one like You. In eternity we will really know that there was truly no one like You, no one like You. In might, in power, in holiness, in righteousness and above all in love. We will realize how much You loved us, then we will see ourselves as we really were on earth and how much we caused suffering to Your loving heart and still how kind You were, how much we displeased You by our worry, and our fears and yet You were patient with us. We just thank You Lord, we just thank You for being patient, 11 months and three days You're patient with us. We stumbled along, with our worries, our doubts, our fears, our reasoning and we caused You to suffer because You love us. Because only those who love suffer, and You suffered because You loved all of us, all Your children equally. But You never became unkind, You're always kind, and it's Your kindness that has brought us thus far. As You promised David I will never remove My mercy from Your Son. Thank You Father, thank You Lord, thank You, thank You Lord. I pray Father touch every heart, let no one fear about surrendering, let them know that if they surrender, we ourselves do not know what God can do with the surrendered vessel. Gideon had no clue while he was threshing wheat. that one day the Midianites would flee before him; that the Midianites would dream Gideon, and fear him. Moses had no clue that the greatest empire would come down by the wave of that rod, if he surrendered. Joshua did not know, if he surrendered, that the sun and the moon would stand still. Peter did not know that his shadow would heal the sick, none of us standing here know what God can do with you. Dear saints, dear brothers and sisters, if you say, 'Here I am, here I am. Use me for Your glory, I die daily, Lord, to myself that You may live, be magnified, be glorified.'

We surrender as a Church, and all our churches, truly Lord, help us to decrease constantly and You increase, that the world may see Jesus and believe Him. Be with us Lord, go with us, through this week, through this month. When the next year comes we will know that we have settled our accounts, we left nothing unfinished, the Spirit of God has shown everything that needs to be shown, we have put it right with God and we have peace and we have liberty, to that end, Lord, I commit Your people into Thy hands. For in Jesus' name we pray. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest and abide with each one of us.

Amen, amen, amen.