

A Clean Heart

by Andrew Strom

This sermon emphasizes the importance of total victory over sin by focusing on the need for deep repentance, faith in Jesus for righteousness, and maintaining a clean conscience before God. It highlights the transformation that occurs when individuals trust in Christ's righteousness and experience a true sense of cleanness before God, leading to a life of holiness and communion with Him.

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Transcript

Father, I have to admit that, only speaking for myself, that sometimes the well seems deep and I don't really have much to draw with. But I thank you that you promised that the springs of living water will spring up. And I pray that as we continue to dwell in your presence, as we continue to open our hearts up to you, that you would cause those springs of living water to spring up, fill us anew, fill us with that water that will cause us to never thirst again.

I pray for our brother Andrew today. I pray that you would fill his heart anew and fresh. I pray that you would, by your Spirit, give him the words that we need to hear today.

Words of life, words of renewal, words of revival. Lord, speak through your servant, Andrew, today. And give us hearts that will be open to receiving, bodies that will be willing to respond with radical obedience, ears that will be able to hear and discern the prompting of your Spirit.

We pray your blessing and anointing on our brother Andrew, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Is this working? Great.

Well, my sermon today is called Total Victory Over Sin. I'm a holiness preacher and a repentance preacher, and I believe that quite often we leave people with the impression that what we're about is an endless life of striving to make something happen and to get it right. And, you know, I preach on repentance, I preach on holiness all the time, wherever I go.

But, you know, the key thing I'm desiring to see in the people is not that they spend their whole life stuck in a rut of condemnation, because that doesn't achieve anything, but breaking through into a place where they know the cleanness of God. They know and they live in a place that is supernatural, really, because human beings can't go there. That has got to be our desire, and if we as holiness preachers, if all we ever do is get people to stop doing things, you know, if all I've managed to do in all my preaching of repentance is some guy comes up to me and says, you know, Andrew, I stopped going to all those movies and I stopped watching certain shows on television and, you know, expecting me to rejoice.

You know, that's not the point. The point of all this is not that we just provide new laws for you to live by. The point of all this is that Christ is so in you, the hope of glory, that your life is so transformed, that you are so clean and so in communion with God that your life is utterly changed.

And we have failed as holiness preachers if we don't ever get you there, because that's the point of an anointed word, is it not? It's all very well having a word, but is it an anointed word? It's got to get people somewhere. It's got to change people's lives. We've got to go somewhere different than where we're at.

The church is not evangelizing because our hearts are not right before God and not full of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Nothing else. We could whip you and whip you and make you go out on the streets and evangelize, and I'd say we have achieved nothing.

We could preach against television till we're blue in the face. Personally, there's so much about television I hate. I think it's ruining and has ruined our culture.

I really believe that. You know, but here's the thing. I could whip you and whip you and tell you the evils of television till I'm blue in the face, but I want to see you transformed in the inner man.

And I don't think making a few new laws is going to do it. And I fear that the biggest trap we have in the holiness movement, because I believe there is a desire for holiness, the biggest trap we have is legalism. The biggest trap in the grace movement is falling into licentiousness, falling over the other side.

The biggest trap we have in what I call the holiness movement is definitely legalism, that it all just becomes a new striving and a new set of laws. We can't do it, can we? It's not the real thing. It's not revival.

You know, let's turn to 1 John chapter 3. John Wesley preached an amazing sermon on this. It pretty much cuts you down and kills you if you read it. 1 John chapter 3, let's start in verse 3. Every man that has this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure.

So a true Christian will purify themselves. If you find yourself at the end of another year and you're not more pure, that you can't see anything that's changed in the previous year, you're not more pure, you don't appear to be growing into the likeness of Christ. Are you a Christian? But that's not what we're talking about today.

Let's go on. Let's jump down to verse 5. And you know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him is no sin. Whoever abides in him sins not.

Whoever sins has not seen him, neither known him. Well, some of these verses are pretty much so shockingly strong. Little children, let no man deceive you.

He that does righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous. He that commits sin is of the devil, for the devil sins from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

And listen to this verse. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin, for his seed remains in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God. My goodness.

Cannot sin because he is born of God. Before I go any further, I just want to pray God's anointing on this word. Father God, Father who is sufficient for these things? Father, we don't just desire today another sermon, oh God.

The last thing we need is another meeting, Father. The last thing we need is another sermon, God. We need to meet with you, Father God.

We need our hearts changed so that these are not words, oh God, but that a reality in our hearts might be birthed where we are clean before you and we know it and walk in it, God. Where the New Testament reality becomes our reality, God. Give that to us, I pray, during this time together today.

Father, let us not call it a sermon, God. Let it be truly a meeting with you, Father. Father, let it not just be some title, oh, victory over sin.

Just another title in the catalog or whatever. God, let it be real to us. Let it be real to us, God.

In the mighty name of Jesus Christ, amen. You know, my desire in preaching deep repentance and in telling people what they need to repent of has got to be that they'll break through into a realm that they've never lived in before. What is that realm? It's being clean before God and living in it.

I was once preaching in a place called New Plymouth in New Zealand where I come from. That's how come I talk so funny, you know. Most of the guys that get up here, we all talk funny, so it's fine.

So I was in New Plymouth in New Zealand and I was preaching to a group that was largely made up of intercessors and I said, have you guys ever experienced and walked in this place where you know that you're clean before God and you just enter into the throne room of God in prayer just like that because there's nothing you have to get right. You're conscious of God's cleanness in you. You're conscious.

You know it. You experience it. I looked out.

It's one of the few times as a preacher I've ever been frightened. One of the few times as a preacher I've ever looked out on a congregation and seen their blank eyes looking back at me and I thought, these are the best people we can gather here. We just gathered the best people here and they're not with me.

They don't know what I'm talking about. They're shocked that I would even say that there is such a thing, that we can walk before God without any consciousness of sin. They were saying no.

I don't think, no. Didn't Jesus come to take away our sins? Isn't the consciousness of sin in God's eyes a kind of stench in itself? It's not just sin that's a stench to God. Adam not only sinned, you know what? He became conscious that he was a sinner.

He runs over and finds something to hide himself in. He goes and knits himself together some foolish little covering to try and hide from God. He's conscious suddenly that he's a sinner and he has to hide from

God and cannot be in communion with God anymore.

What is the thing that God wants you conscious of as a true New Testament believer? What is the experience preached by John Wesley and Charles Finney and many of the great awakening preachers? When you boil it right down, it's a sense of God's cleanness so filling you that you're not even conscious of being a sinner anymore. You just walk with God in Christ and it's His righteousness and you know it and experience it and it's real and therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God. And you say, can we experience such a thing? And I say, all of the great awakening preachers preached it so it must be possible.

You know, John Wesley, he came to America as a missionary being unsaved himself. But as an Anglican clergyman, he came to America as a missionary. He was a complete failure.

He was worse than a failure. He was a fiasco. On his way home, many of us have heard this story.

On his way home, he met the Moravians on the ship and there were storms and everything. He said, these guys, they didn't care about the storms. They just praised God.

They were true Christians. He said he'd never seen anything like that. He was quaking in fear.

He just came home saying, oh God, I went to save the Indians. I went to save the Americans who, oh God, shall save me. He gets home, he starts talking to Peter Bowler and the other Moravians and they start speaking to him about a clean heart experience.

A clean heart experience. He said, I had never heard of such a thing. Never even in my wildest dreams.

I thought that you just felt bad all the time and spent all your time repenting and getting right and striving. What kind of faith is that? Who are you trusting in? I guess he was trusting in John Wesley. John Wesley can never be perfect.

I can never be perfect. There's only one who can be perfect in me. That is Christ Jesus.

And when he found out that gospel and experienced it for himself and began to preach it with his good friend, George Whitefield, who really came into that experience first, the great awakening began. The great awakening began because their preaching and experience that is supposed to be ours as New Testament people, and I want to tell you, the greatest tragedy of our hour and the greatest tragedy of modern Christianity, we don't know at all. We never hear about it.

We don't know what it is. Can you be clean before God? Yes, we can agree to that. Can we know that we're clean before God? Oh, my goodness.

Can we know this cleanness before God and walk in that place? Many people would say, I don't know about that. Turn with me to Romans chapter eight. Do I think that the modern church knows what faith is? I question it.

We talk so much about faith, we think that believing in Jesus, we think we have a handle on this. I put it to you that believing in Jesus, of course, the equivalent words would be trusting or relying upon Jesus to save you, is not what we do at all. We have a kind of mixture of grace and works and law going on all the time inside of us and we try and keep our slate clean with God.

We try and keep our slate clean with God and when we feel like our slate is clean and okay with God, we feel on top of the world and when we kick the cat and get mad and slam the door, we go, oh, man, oh, man, and we say, maybe now I'm not righteous anymore. Maybe now I'm a sinner. Maybe now Christ is not in me, the hope of glory.

Maybe now I should trust in myself and my own righteousness to save me. What is real faith? Who are we trusting in? Is it myself? Can I perfect myself and make myself so holy? Can I clean the outside of this cup so well that it becomes so righteous and so clean that God is happy enough to bring me into heaven, Andrew Strom, based on my own merits? I tell you, it will never be and yet we act like it is possible all the time and so much of our holiness preaching is preaching to clean too much the outside of the cup and not enough the inside, which too often is still full of dead man's bones and every unclean thing. I don't think that's a revival message.

I don't think that's a revival message. I don't think that's the message of John Wesley. Before we go any further, let me just read out something to you.

This is Charles Finney. Now, I'm not a fan of Charles Finney's theology, to be honest with you, or some of it at least, but I am a huge fan of him as one of the greatest preachers America's ever seen, one of the greatest revival repentance preachers we've ever seen in the United States, in North America. He says this about his conversion, the day he was converted.

He deeply, deeply repented. He got filled with the Holy Spirit. The filling of the Holy Spirit was so strong, he said, I had to cry out to God.

These enormous waves of the Spirit of God were coming over me. He said, I had to cry out to God lest I die this day. But this is what he wrote later about his conversion, about this tremendous, powerful experience of repentance, et cetera.

In this state, I was taught justification by faith as a present experience. I could not feel a sense of guilt or condemnation by any effort I could make. I could not feel a sense of guilt or condemnation by any effort I could make.

My sense of guilt was gone. My sins were gone. I do not think I felt any more sense of guilt than if I never had sinned, I felt myself justified by faith.

And so far as I could see, I was in a state in which I did not sin. These are shocking words to me. Because it's not just that his sins have been forgiven, he has no sense of being a sinner before God anymore.

And he just walked in that. He just went on and walked in that. He has no sense of being a sinner anymore.

Why? Because of justification by faith. Who's he trusting in now? He's not trusting in Charles Finney anymore. He is so experiencing the life of Christ inside of him, who of course is perfect.

He is so experiencing that. He doesn't even look at himself no more. He's not looking at Charles Finney to be the righteousness, you know, he's not looking at the outward form and he's not looking at himself and at the shell that he lives in anymore.

He's saying, Christ has made me perfect in Jesus. That's where I'm perfect. Where do I walk now? What's my mindset upon now? The righteousness of Christ.

Can I trust in Jesus living inside of me to be righteous before God? Yes, I can. Can I live there? Yes, I can. I can.

I can. Because of what Christ did for me and in me. I can.

Am I a sinner? Do you know what? This outward body of mine, it's not really capable of being anything else. No matter how long I go on with the Lord, do you know how I've been walking 25 years, I'm just a spirit-filled Christian now. And every year I see new things about this shell that I would quite like to change, this shell that I'm living in.

Because it doesn't conform perfectly to the will of God and even though it does get purified and it has to according to Scripture, otherwise I'm no true Christian. The Holy Spirit living in this temple will bring forth good fruit. But I'm not gonna trust in that to save me.

What am I supposed to be putting my trust in? What kind of thing am I supposed to be conscious of before God? I wanna tell you that I'm clean and utterly clean, that this is salvation. That I'm clean and utterly clean, not me, but Christ that lives in me. Whose robes do I wear? Not my own.

Heck, those things are like filthy rags. They cannot save me. I don't wear my own robes.

I'm not gonna appear on judgment day before God hoping in my own robes to save me. I better appear there with white robes washed in the blood of Jesus and my goodness, boy, do I stand a good chance then. What kind of shield do I have? I have the best shield in the world against the wrath of a holy God, because that's what's gonna be hitting everybody.

I better have a good shield against that thing, the wrath of a holy God will be smashing over some of the brightest and most successful people we've ever seen. It'll be destroying them one after the other, and we will run behind one shield and one shield only, and it's not mine. It's the righteousness of Jesus.

Can I live inside of that and experience it as a reality? Yes, I can. Because that's the gospel, is it not? Why are we supposed to get clean before God, yet always feel like a sinner? Romans chapter eight, verse one, addresses the very issue. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. There is therefore now no condemnation. Do you know what that means? It means if I'm truly in the spirit of God and fully grasping what it is that he's done in me and for me, there is no condemnation.

What does that mean? I will not feel like a sinner before God because Christ in me is so much the righteousness that I seek, and that's all I need. There is now therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Doesn't that scripture just go right bang with therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Doesn't that scripture just go with it is therefore now no longer I that live but Christ that lives in me. But Christ that lives in me.

I wonder if you're walking in yourself today. You know, I don't like walking in dead people. This is a serious point, I know it's kind of funny.

I don't like walking in dead people because they're dead, and I wish they'd stay that way. If you're walking in yourself, why are you trying to do that to please God? Why aren't you walking in Jesus? If you're trusting in yourself to save yourself, what on earth are you doing? You think you can clean the outside of the cup a little bit better and make it more pure before God? You know, I believe in conviction of sin. I preach for conviction of sin.

I preach repentance all the time. I want to tell you it is a means to a breakthrough. Deep repentance to me is a place of getting clean before God so you can experience it and what then? Walk in it every day.

You say, but isn't that hard? I say, if it's hard, I don't think it's Jesus. I think it's you. If it's hard, who are you trusting, relying, and putting your faith in? Is it you or is it Christ? It's no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me.

Is it a reality to you? Well, in that case, you'll feel clean before God. You know, the stuff I'm talking about here is no theory. For Charles Finney on this day, it was not a theory.

It was a practical reality. He said, in this state, I was taught justification by faith. What does justification mean? Made right with God.

I was taught justification by faith as a present experience. I could not make myself feel guilt or condemnation by any effort I could make. In other words, he tried to make himself feel bad.

It didn't work. The righteousness of Christ was so strong in him that he couldn't make himself feel unclean. You say, well, that's Charles Finney.

I say, that's the New Testament. That's the book of Romans. We can chop it out if you want to.

We'll make an ugly mess of our Bibles. But this is normal. What did Watchman Nee write a book called, based on Romans 5, 6, 7, and 8? What's the book called? The Normal Christian Life.

The Normal Christian Life. If you go read that book, you will see everything I'm talking about today written there in black and white. I believe it's one of the best sellers, 20 million sold, I believe.

And yet, where are the people living in this? What is the gospel that will be preached in the next great awakening? God willing that we have one. What will be the gospel that is preached? A clean heart gospel. A gospel where you get clean before God and you know it and walk in it by the Spirit of God.

You say, yeah, but I'm not quite getting this. Aren't we supposed to keep short accounts before God and always kind of feel bad about ourselves and be striving every day to be better and better? And I say, have you read Hebrews? There remains, therefore, a rest to the people of God. There remains, therefore, a rest to the people of God.

Who are you resting in? Who are you relying upon to save you? Who's doing the good works in you? People, when I speak on these things, they get a kind of faraway look in their eyes as though they should know what I'm talking about, but they can't quite go there. This is the look that those people in New Plymouth had. I want to tell you, I was devastated after that talk.

I got down from the platform, expecting these people to know of which I spoke, to just know it. Surely, surely you experience cleanness before God. Surely you know.

Surely you experience cleanness before God. Isn't that what it is? Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God. Don't you experience cleanness before God? Isn't it an experience that you've had that you can walk in by the Spirit of God? There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh.

I don't look at this thing anymore. If I did, I would despair. Whenever I start looking at this thing and see how well it's doing, I go, oh my goodness.

It gets more purified every year. It brings forth better fruit. It has to.

The thing is a piece of junk. That's why Romans 6 spins itself telling us that the place that this thing belongs in is the grave. Don't you know it says that as many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death, we were therefore buried with Him in baptism into death.

But Christ that lives in me. Can we experience this as a reality where we are clean? You know what people should cry out before God when the Spirit of God first hits them, when they first have that conversion experience. A lot of people, they experience this for a few weeks, but you know what it should be? It should be, God, I'm clean, I'm clean, I'm clean.

God, I'm clean, I'm clean. You know, that's what a leper would cry out, wouldn't it? You know, the lepers used to have to walk around with somebody in front of them crying out, unclean, unclean, unclean. Can you imagine what it was like to get cleansed of leprosy and to be able to cry out to God, God, I'm clean, God, I'm clean.

Imagine Naaman in the Old Testament. He's told by the prophet, go and bathe yourself seven times in the Jordan River. He goes and obeys the prophet of God.

God, I'm clean, I'm clean, I'm clean. That is the cry of salvation. What's John Wesley's favorite verse? They say, I believe it's down here in Romans chapter eight, verse 16.

Or verse 15 and 16. For you've not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. And this is John Wesley's, apparently his favorite verse.

The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. You know, if you're a child of God, the spirit will be bearing witness inside of you, crying out, Abba, Father. I'm clean, I'm clean, I'm clean.

What did Adam lose? What was it that Adam lost that Jesus had to buy back at a tremendous expense? Cleanness and innocence. That's what Adam lost. He could only do one sin and he went and did it.

What did Jesus buy back for us? Cleanness, innocence before God. Do we experience it in this thing? To a very limited degree. To some degree, yes.

To a limited degree. Where do I experience the cleanness? Where am I made into a new creation? It's no longer I that live. A new creation.

Where do I experience it? In the inner man. In the inner man, even though this thing may not be perfect, I can walk perfect before God. Why? Because I'm not trusting in me to be perfect.

I'm not trusting in Andrew Strong to be perfect. Who am I trusting in? Christ. You say it's a nice theory, sir.

Mr. Preacher Man, it's a nice theory. Hmm. It's not a theory.

It's not a theory. If your heart is not crying out, Abba Father, if the Spirit of God is not witnessing inside of you, how do you get peace with God? Do you know how holy God is? Do you know how much he hates sin? Do you know how he can't stand being around even Adam, his best friend, when Adam became a sinner? He's cast out of the presence of God. And angels are set there so that he cannot return.

So God cannot live with sin. A lot of people say, Oh, God doesn't mind. God's okay.

God is a very forgiving God. When I get up there, God's gonna be fine with me, even though I'm a sinner and still have things in my life and on my conscience that I know are wrong. And I say, I think you've got the wrong God.

Because God cast his best friend, Adam, out of the garden as soon as he sinned. And it was a stench in God's nostrils that something that he created pure and innocent now knew he was a sinner and stank of that as well. Not only did he sin, he had a consciousness of being a sinner all the time.

And you try coming into God's holy presence in that state, and I tell you, you won't get far. You will not get far. God hates sin so much, he had to send his son down to go through agony to get rid of it.

That's how much God hates sin. What is he doing in that process? He's buying you and me back. What does he want us to be? Clean so we can live and walk with him.

He used to walk with Adam in the cool of the evening every night. Are you that close to God? And you say, well, you know, I don't pray like I should. I didn't ask you that.

There's only one thing that you need to get close to God. A sense of Jesus's cleanness in you. A knowing Jesus's cleanness in you so strong you don't feel like a sinner anymore before God.

You are in the throne room of God, bam. You just start to pray and bam, you're in the throne room of God. People go, oh, you know what we need to do before we get in the throne room of God? We've got to praise God for 10 minutes.

Then you've got to repent of every sin you can imagine in your life for another 15 minutes. And then you might have a chance of getting close to God. Do we have a clean conscience before God? This is the only thing that can defile us, you know that.

Most of the church lives in a state where they have spots on their robe. This is why they don't experience this. If we can only get our conscience clean and rely on Jesus living in us, we can walk in cleanness before God.

And I say, what's on your conscience that maybe is not allowing this process to occur? You know, we haven't been trained in the church, here's how to keep your conscience clean before God. You just, when the chance comes to sin, you just avert your eyes from that thing. You just don't indulge it.

You so value a clean conscience before God, you will not go there. You just can't stand to be out of communion with God. You just love being in communion with God.

If any spot, if you do do something serious enough where a spot jumps on that robe, you're instantly aware of it, or you go, oh God, oh God, forgive me. Oh God. That's the moment in which repentance comes into play and you get clean again.

And then you walk in that place of cleanness before God because the only thing that can defile and ruin this process is that unclean conscience. If I can get a clean conscience and trust in Jesus to be my righteousness, not me. If I can do these two things, these are very simple things to the person that truly is saved.

These are very simple things. Trust in Christ to be my righteousness, not me. I'll trust in him to be my righteousness living in me.

And I'll keep my conscience clean before God. You say, is that? Yeah. That's not even that hard, people.

You know, when I get up in the morning, as a natural human being, I don't think to myself, okay, Andrew, remember to breathe. You know. And don't forget to breathe, otherwise you'll probably die.

I don't get up in the morning having to remind myself, why? Because I naturally do this. What is the natural state of the new creation that Christ has made us to be? What is the natural state? To be clean before God. To be in the place that Adam lost before God.

The only thing that cannot come back into place that Adam lost is our physical human body. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. This thing, it's a goner.

When I pass out of this earth, this thing gets thrown away. What survives, the inward part of me, it had better be clean before God with a clean conscience, trusting in Christ, His righteousness, not mine. Amen? You know, the stuff I'm telling you is not rocket science.

It's absolute basic gospel. But to Wesley's ears and to so many people that I talk to, it sounds so foreign and new. And I want to tell you, this place in God will be preached in any great awakening it has to be.

Because it really is gospel 101, but it feels like gospel 3000. Because we never hear it preached. What is faith? You say, what is faith then? Faith is trusting in Jesus and not in yourself for righteousness.

Faith is living in Him and not in yourself. Faith, you know, it says don't walk in the flesh but by the Spirit. What is it saying? It's saying stop looking at yourself and start looking at Christ and His righteousness and living and walking.

You know, it says those who are in Christ have clothed themselves, it says. Some translations, put on Christ. We put on Christ like a robe, like a garment.

When you do that and walk in Him, do you feel like a sinner anymore before God? If you can truly be that aware of Christ's righteousness living in you, do you feel like a sinner? No. Did Adam feel like a sinner? No. No.

Is Jesus a sinner? Of course not. Who am I living in? Him. Not me.

Can you live there? Well, if so, be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Of course. What is the way into this place? You better get there by deep repentance.

There's a lot of people trying to fake their way in. They psychologically trick their mind to say, oh, I'm clean, I'm clean, I'm clean, I'm fine, I'm fine, I'm fine with God. They didn't get there by deep repentance.

They didn't get there by way of the cross. It's illegal. It's forced entry.

It's nothing. There's grace movements out there preaching this kind of stuff, but the access is not right. It's not according to the foundation laid by the apostles.

If you want to be knowing the righteousness of Christ dwelling in you, what's stopping you? Didn't Jesus already give you everything? If we're not supposed to get back everything Adam lost, what is the point of all of this? Isn't that what it's all about? I want to share with you and just digress from this topic for a second to an important addendum. Hebrews chapter 6. Some people cannot walk in this because these foundations are not laid in their lives. Listen, do you know there's only one passage where these foundations are outlined in the whole New Testament so we better know it well? It's talking about the foundation of Christ that must be laid, the foundation that they would lay as apostles in somebody's life to make sure they were then capable of walking and living in the Spirit of God.

Remember the title of my sermon today is Total Victory Over Sin. It can just be a theory. We can preach a message on that and it's just a theory.

I want it to be real. At the end of the sermon we're going to be praying for it to be totally real to everybody. Let's look at these foundations first.

Okay. Okay. Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of... And he lists six things that are the foundation here.

The foundation of repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands. There's a controversial one. Resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.

You'll hear us modern revival guys like Paul Washer and Mark who preached earlier, myself, we talk about the fact that the sinner's prayer that we use is not found in the New Testament at all. We don't see them using that method to get foundations into people to get them truly and utterly saved. We never see it.

Not one time. What do we see them doing? We see them using these foundations to get people so anchored in Jesus that they take off like a rocket ship because there's repentance, there's faith, and all the way through the book of Acts you see them baptizing people. That's the third one.

Baptism happens even in the middle of the night in the book of Acts. And then hands are laid on, the Holy Spirit comes upon them and they're filled with the Holy Spirit. And here's my Pentecostal side of me says, and they often or almost always are speaking in tongues and prophesying.

We want to be technically correct in the book of Acts. Let me tell you what happened to me. You know, I was a good Baptist boy.

Actually, I was a rather poor Baptist boy but I pretended to be good. And I was in New Zealand, I was going to a Baptist youth group every week and my life was hell on the inside. I've been raised in a Christian family.

I was so depressed every day. I wanted to kill myself every day. I wanted desperately to die.

And I'm not joking. I don't know if you know what it's like to come home from school every day. This has happened from the age of 14 through to 17.

Every day just dying to end my life. Just so longing to end my life. Hating myself.

Why? Because I hated one of my parents. Loathed one of my parents. Had an incredible bitterness in my heart towards them.

Wanted to kill them. Wanted to kill myself. Just torture and agony.

Imagine three or four years of this. Can you imagine that? All this time we're going to youth camps. We're going to family Christian camps.

We're going to Pentecostal churches. We're going to Baptist churches. I got into this youth group.

A couple of the people there, they said to me, Andrew, we got filled with the Holy Spirit and our life has been dramatically changed. I said, I don't believe in that Pentecostal stuff. It just freaks me out.

And they said to me, oh well, it's what's happened to us. So, this is in Baptist youth group. These were some of the leaders of it.

I was hanging around with the most zealous people and I don't know why. I was hanging around with the most zealous Christians. I don't know why that was.

And I was hanging around with them and the holiness of God was in these people. And I could feel it and sense it and it was affecting me. And every week that went by, I started to hunger and thirst after God.

I wanted holiness in my life and I knew that I'd been resisting all these years surrendering my whole life to God. Do you know I prayed that little sinner's prayer thing every night for weeks on end. I probably prayed it over a hundred times and it didn't do anything.

Over and over and so depressed, so depressed wanting to end my life. I'm 17 years old and finally it gets to this holiness of God, this presence of God, it gets to me. I say, you know what God, I have had enough of running from you.

I have had enough of running from you. I sat in my mother's car, which I was allowed to drive around in at the time, sat in there. I said, God, this is it.

Everything is yours. Now that's a sinner's prayer God might hear. I felt shaken by the power of God and do you know what, literally, I literally came out of it.

I literally was trembling. I remember just trembling and trembling praying to God that prayer. All I was doing was praying.

I went round to my friend, my friends had been round to this guy's place and he had laid hands on them and prayed for them. I went round to the same guy's house, I said, pray for me. I want to get filled with the Holy Spirit.

If you don't like Pentecostalism, just blank out the next 30 seconds. Because all he did was pray the simplest prayer on earth, just sitting down. God, fill me with the Holy Spirit.

I was so filled with the love and the joy of God and the depression and the desire to kill myself, the hatred of my parents, lifted off of me in one second and I didn't even recognize it was gone until like a couple of days. I was thinking, why do I feel so, that incredible heaviness that has been aching in me for years, just killing me, is gone. It's gone.

And the next day, this is the bit, I spoke in tongues for the first time. Spoke in tongues. Does this happen in the book of Acts? Of course it does.

What's laying on of hands always connected with? We just read laying on of hands. What's it always connected with? Baptism in the Holy Spirit. You can dismiss Pentecostalism as much as you like.

Do you know what? I'm so appalled and saddened and sickened by what we've become in the Pentecostal movement. The charismatic movement to me, as someone who was brought up in it, it's sick, it's appalling. I can't get over what's happening to us.

Because it used to, in the 70s, be a holiness movement. My parents took me to Keswick camps in New Zealand. They used to hold holiness unto the Lord.

The Pentecostals were into holiness in the 1970s. What has happened to us? It's froth, it's bubble, it's nothing. It's garbage.

And I hate to think of the spirits that are roaming around in the movement. There's guys around in our movement now. I wouldn't let them pray for a dog of mine.

And I don't own any dogs. Sincerely, something terrible has happened. But the purity of this experience was still real.

And at the core of it, at the heart of it, if we can be biblical about it, we can still go to God for that. And for me, it was the breakthrough. You know, I'd always been so timid.

After I had that experience, I would literally walk up to gang members with tattoos on their face and speak to them about Jesus. And they were frightened of me. They were frightened.

A skinny little kid. They were frightened of me as a 17-year-old. Why? It's just, they don't know how to do, they can't, they don't want to kill you.

They'd like to beat you up, but you're too skinny. What do you do? And preaching truth and not scared and not afraid. All the fear was gone.

Filled with the love of God. Listen to me. Charles Finney's experience is a reality.

Can you be clean before God? Yes, you can. Because all you have to do is rely on Christ living in you, not on yourself. And all you have to do is keep a clean conscience before God.

Just keep your conscience clean. And you can live and walk where Adam walked. Communing with God in the cool of the evening every day.

Stop trusting in yourself. Stop being your own salvation. Start trusting in Jesus.

Start living and walking in Him. Start being the Christian God made you to be. Make sure the foundations are laid in your life and go for it.

There is no other prerequisite. If you have the six foundations, you have everything God needs to give to you for this. That's all Charles Finney was getting that day.

He's deeply repenting. He's getting filled with the Spirit of God. Listen.

This is revival. You know, I've studied revival for 25 years. And I want to tell you, to me, I want to tell you what revival is.

Revival is the return of the gospel. Revival is the return of real Christianity. Where it totally infects you from the inside out.

Revival is you and the church becoming clean and going out there and preaching it to the world and them starting to become clean before God. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't that simple? What a beautiful scripture that is.

Can we find a more beautiful scripture than that? It's time to pray. Please stand with me. Now, I said at the start, I want this to be totally practical.

There are people in this room, I know it, who are virtually grasping everything I say and yet there is just this, I don't know what it is, there's this distance there. And I want to tell you, God wants to fill you with faith to trust in Jesus. I say it again, God wants to fill you with faith to trust in Christ for your salvation and stop looking at yourself.

God wants to cleanse your conscience. If there's any spot on your conscience today, now's the time to confess it. Simple stuff.

I'm going to pray this for all of us. If you so desire this and yet you're feeling like you can't quite grasp it, if this is your desire, if you want a fresh surrender to God today, please raise your hands to heaven with me. I'm going to pray for all of us who have our hands raised to God that we would live and walk in this as a reality every day.

Father God, Father I pray for all of us in this room, O God, as we raise our hands to you in heaven, O God, make this a reality that we would be clean and utterly clean in you. By the Spirit of God, pour down your Spirit upon us, O God. Let the blood of Jesus wash us utterly clean today, God.

Cleanse our conscience. We don't hide our sins anymore. We confess them to you.

And we say we will not hide them, God. Make us clean. O God, let our robes be washed clean and grant to us this faith that we trust not in ourselves anymore to make ourselves pure on the outside.

But Father, let us trust in Jesus. God, God, give us this faith, this supernatural faith to put our trust in Christ to be our righteousness today, God. And to experience it as a reality, O God.

And to preach it out there where a lost and dying world is going to hell without Jesus, O God. And they can't even dream of righteousness because they think they have to do it all themselves. God, make us preachers of truth to these people.

Bring us to this generation preaching the kind of gospel that a Wesley would preach, God. And let us see the thousands of our youth coming in when they hear this call, Father. O God, make us a new people.

O God, wash us clean. O God, give us a new faith. Cleanse us and change us, we pray.

In the mighty name of Jesus Christ, Amen and Amen.

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