

Sins Against the Holy Spirit

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of not sinning against the Holy Spirit, which includes resisting, quenching, lying to, flattering, and fretting God, and provides practical advice on how to avoid these sins and live a clean and holy life.

Duration: 52:44

Scripture: Micah 3:8, Mark 3:8

Topics: "Grieving The Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker, Sam, shares a powerful story of how God protected him from a dangerous situation involving five armed men. Sam emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's plan and purpose for our lives, even in the face of danger. He also recounts another incident where he was challenged to pray in front of others and how God filled him with the Holy Spirit as a result. The sermon concludes with a reminder to believe in the truth of the Bible and to avoid provoking God through repetitive sin or trying to imitate the work of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

Good afternoon. I want to read from Luke 11, verse 1. And it came to pass that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When you pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us day by day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Now, the Lord's Prayer in Luke goes much further than this. You may not know this, but in the Catholic Church, when they read the Lord's Prayer, this is the prayer they read. They don't read the rest of it.

And I understand from my reading that the reason is, Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, which is God's, they say belongs to the Pope. So figure that one out. And he said unto them, now remember he's answering their request for prayer, how to pray.

He said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine in his journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not, the door is now shut. My children are with me in bed.

I cannot rise and give you. I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needs. The word importunity means shameless acts, asking, or asking that will not be denied.

Okay? Because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needs. And I say unto you, ask. It's really be asking, be seeking, be knocking.

I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, you shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you. To everyone that asks, receive.

And he that seeks, finds. And to him that knocks, it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an aid, will you offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? You might remember in Zechariah, it speaks about God pouring on his people the spirit of grace and supplication.

Supplication is prayer. One translation says that pours on his people the spirit of grace to supplicate. And Finney called this the spirit of prayer.

He said, if I ever lose the spirit of prayer, I can't converse effectively with individuals or with people, with audiences. I must have the spirit of prayer. So he spent hours daily crying to God, believing God, fasting often.

This was a big thing in his heart and life. I'll get back to this in a little bit. I have something else along the line to introduce it.

I want to talk about sins against the Holy Spirit. Some while ago, God gave me a message which I've only preached once, and the title of the message was, The Grieving Holy Spirit. Now, get it there? The grieving Holy Spirit.

I believe the Holy Spirit is grieving for the church in North America because of our selfishness and disobedience and all that's going on. All right. Sins against the Spirit.

There's a sin of resisting, and Stephen accuses Sanhedrin people of being this, doing this. He said, you stiff neck and uncircumcised heart and ears. You do always resist the Holy Ghost.

As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they've slain them who showed before of the coming of a just one, who you've now betrayed and murdered. And they killed them for it.

Resisting the Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, they were pricked in their hearts and said, men and brethren, what should we do? When Stephen preached to these guys, they were cut to the heart and they gnashed on them with their teeth. They didn't want that.

They didn't want a spiritual religion. They didn't want any changes in the organization in Israel. They were running it their way.

And he got in the way. So they stoned him to death that particular day. Judas Iscariot, I often wonder about him.

With Christ, three years, a little longer than three years probably, saw all those miracles. I'm sure he saw thousands of people touched and healed, heard all the teaching, yet betrayed Christ. I say, how can this be? What kind of heart did he have? And all this while he was stealing money.

He was the treasurer for the group of 12 and was stealing money from this. And he thought he could get away with it? How blind a human heart can become. God said just before the flood, my spirit shall not always strive with man.

There's a striving going on, God's spirit striving with us. And then men striving against God, resisting when we should be thanking God that he's speaking to us for our good, resisting the spirit. Then quenching the spirit.

We're warned about this in verse 519. Quench not the spirit. It has the idea of throwing water on a fire because the spirit is a fire.

When John the Baptist in Matthew 3 said, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Isaiah 4.4, God said he was going to cleanse the filth of Zion and Jerusalem with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. The spirit of judgment, that's the Holy Spirit convicting people of sin.

The spirit of burning, that's what he does. When we get honest and submit any burdens, the sin is gone. In Isaiah 1, God said I will turn my hand upon you and purge away all your dross and take away all your sin.

He can do that if we want him to do it. There's a place in Zephaniah, I believe it is, where the Lord said he was going to stamp on. I mean, that's what the Hebrew says.

He will stamp, I will stamp on your iniquities. If God stamps on my sin, what's he going to do with them? He's going to break them. That's the whole idea.

He can do that. He waits to be asked and waits to be asked in an honest way. Do not quench.

Don't throw water on the fire. And if you want to rekindle the fire, you got to use combustible material. Suppose you saw a guy on the beach, and he's got a pile of old tin cans there and a bunch of rocks, and he comes along with a big piece of rusty iron and throws it on this pile, and finally you say, what are you doing, man? Oh, I'm building a fire.

But you know, to get a fire, you got to have combustible material. Don't you know that? And sometimes we don't know. To get the fire going, you've got to use combustible material.

And God said that his Word is like a fire. And the Spirit, who is fire, applies the fire of the Word. You see, the agent is the Holy Spirit.

The instrument is the Word of God. To get the fire going, you just have to get together with the Spirit of God. Yield yourself.

Tell him how you feel. You know, Nicholson, he was a guy in Ireland, a terrible character, apparently a boozier, a fighter, a blasphemer, and he got converted, but he had no victory over his sin. He kept on getting drunk sometimes and blaspheming, but he received Christ.

And he kept crying to God, what's wrong? What's wrong, you know? Then he heard of a holiness meeting, and he dropped in. I don't know who was doing the preaching. And God got through to him, and he saw it's not enough to receive Christ as Savior.

You have to receive him as Lord. And this meant anything God asked you to do, Nicholson, you've got to do it. And he made up his mind he would.

He promised God he would do that. Not long after this, in the place where he lived, there was a Salvation Army Corps, and all they had in the Corps were two teenage girls and a guy that was so deaf, they said he couldn't have a headache. That was the whole Corps.

That's all they had. And they were standing on the streets, usually Saturday night, some other nights besides, and God told Nicholson he wanted him to go and stand with these kids, this deaf guy. And he said, well, not Saturday night.

See, Saturday night, everybody was coming to town. All his cronies would be there, and they would see him standing with the Salvation Army. That wasn't really nice.

So he begged God, let it be on Wednesday. I'll be glad to go on Wednesday. No, it's Saturday.

So he finally went. So he's standing with these two girls and this deaf guy. He had a sandwich board on him or something, this deaf fellow.

Anyway, he's standing there, and one of the girls suddenly said to him, and some of these guys, his old pals, were standing in the sidewalk watching, laughing, you know. And she said, God isn't doing anything. Nicholson, pray.

Get down on your knees and pray. What? Get down on my knees and pray in front of these guys? He obeyed. But God told him, go ahead.

You said you'd do anything. So he knelt and prayed. And they got to their feet.

And then a few minutes later, one of the girls said, Nicholson, ladies, like a parade, down to the headquarters. And so here he is. This is no parade.

This is horrible. Two teenage girls and this deaf guy, and Nicholson in front of them. And he said, okay, God, I'll do it.

And they started to go. And you know what happened? God filled him with the Holy Ghost as they were going along the street that day. He became a powerful evangelist.

Thousands were saved through his ministry. And he never had problems with his old sins. It was God.

When he surrendered to God and humbled himself, if you humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, do what he's asking you to do, he'll lift you up. And sometimes it's a high lifting, as it certainly was in his particular case. He was a very, he saw thousands converted.

One time in a big meeting, only two people came forward to be saved. And afterwards, one of his friends said, Nicholson, you could have had 50 people at the altar. You just had to work a little longer.

Oh, yeah, I said we could have had 100 at the altar, but only two would be converted. So he had that right too. Anyway, don't quench the spirit.

Don't lie to the spirit. Peter said to Ananias and Sapphira, well, he said to Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? So it's possible to lie to the Holy Ghost. I don't know exactly what went on here, except I think they were trying, they were somehow testing the thing to see if the Spirit of God would really catch them if they didn't give the right amount that they had failed to give.

The idea was you were to sell stuff and give the money to be given to the poor. And they didn't give the whole amount. They lied to Peter.

He did, and then she did not when her husband was already dead and buried. She came and did the same thing. She died too.

Lying to the Holy Ghost. So be very careful. It's possible to do that, I'm sure.

When we do that, the Bible said it's better not to vow than to vow and not pay. God has no pleasure in a fool. So if you made a promise to God and you're not doing it, you've been really lying to God, and God has no pleasure in a fool.

It's better to keep your mouth shut than to say nothing, is what it's saying in the Word of God in Ecclesiastes. Okay, don't lie to the Spirit. The Spirit, remember now, is a fire.

And I should have mentioned something here. I had a friend, a Latvian fellow, and he was a Lutheran. And he was a Christian, born again a believer.

He said, you know, back in Lat... He was living in Canada. But he said, back in Latvia, sometimes the Baptists would have street meetings. And he said, we used to like to listen to them because they spoke with fire in their mouth.

He said, they're so different from the Lutheran preachers. We just love to hear them speaking with fire in their mouth. We've got to do the same sometimes, you know.

You've got to be serious about it. Do you remember what happened when Pharaoh asked Jacob, how old are you? Do you remember that? Here's this guy, he'd been a believer all his life. And this heathen king, Pharaoh, asked him, maybe he was a Christian by that time already.

I don't really know. He says, how old are you? And he said, oh, I was 135. Few and evil are the days and the years of my life being, and I have attained to the years and the days of my father's and their pilgrimage.

I say to myself, what a testimony. Can you imagine Pharaoh getting anything out of that? There was no fire in Jacob's mouth. Oh, he had a horrible time, you know.

You don't want to become a believer. He sounds like a modern evangelical, you know. No fire there.

Nothing going on. Unhappy with God and unhappy with others and all this garbage that's in our churches today. We've got to get rid of that personally.

We have to be a clean vessel. I heard of a guy who built a cottage at a lake and had everything done, plumbing everything, and had a bunch of friends come for a weekend, and the water wouldn't flow in the pipes. So he got this plumber back, and he went through the system and discovered a great big frog stuck in the pipe.

And sometimes you and I are the big frog stuck in God's pipe, and nothing flows because we're in the way. Don't be a frog in the pipe. Be clean.

Channels only. Bless the Savior. That's the thing.

That's the whole thing. That beautiful song. With all his wondrous power flowing through us, thou canst use us.

Let him use you. Open up. Witness to people.

Pray. Be a real New Testament believer. Then don't flatter the Spirit of God.

How can we do that? It speaks about this in Psalm 78, about people flattering God. How can you flatter God? You can flatter God by telling Him how great and how wonderful He is and never trusting Him. It's just a bunch of words, you know.

You're flattering God. You're a great guy, God. You fill the heavens and the earth, and I know how great you are.

Then you don't trust Him. You don't listen to Him. You don't do anything you should be doing.

That's flattering God. A very serious thing. Then don't provoke God.

The Bible speaks in Ezekiel about people. It says that God was fretted. He said, they fretted me, you know.

How can you fret God? Three times in Psalm 37, we're told not to fret. Not to fret. Not to be upset.

Not to be provoked. And so that's, I think, what He has in mind here. And God said to Moses, how long will it be ere these people believe Me? How long will they keep on provoking Me, fretting God? I mean, He's using a term we understand.

You can't really see God fretting, but He can be provoked by our attitude and especially by our stubbornness. You know that old song, there's a line in it, I don't sing, or I would sing. How does it go? Oh yeah.

He'll never make you go against your will, but He'll sure make you willing to go. And He's got a way of doing that. He can, I'm telling you, I know from experience, you can't outfox God.

You can't outwit Him. You can't get away from Him. Where will you hide? Somebody said to me, if you can fly at the speed of light for 10 million years and land on some planet, God will greet you when you land.

You can't get away. He's everywhere. He knows us.

And remember, He loves us. Don't fret Him. Doing something again and again and again and again, you've asked God to forgive you, you keep on doing it again, and it frets God, it provokes God.

There's nobody like Simon the Sorcerer. I don't know how to describe his sin, except he was trying to emanate the Holy Ghost. When he saw it, you see, he was the big shot in the community when Philip showed up.

In no time at all, Philip was the big shot when Simon was on the shelf. And he resented that terribly. And finally, when he saw, when the apostles came down and laid hands on these new converts, when he saw what was happening, he offered them money.

He offered Peter some money and said, give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. He wanted to be the big shot again. And what did Peter say? Well, one translation says, he said, to destruction you and your money, because you thought the gift of God may be purchased with money.

You have neither part nor lot in this manner. And he said, I perceive that you're in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. Why was Simon bitter? He was bitter because he was no longer the big shot.

He believed on Christ. He was baptized. But Peter said, your heart is not right in the sight of God.

And it's true for many of us as believers, our hearts are not right in the sight of God. But he saw a way of getting to be the big guy again, you know. That's why he asked for this.

He offered them money. Why was he bitter? Well, he was bitter, as I say, because he lost his position in the community. Why was he in the bond of iniquity if he was a Christian? You see, when Philip came, there were many, many people, it says in the account in Acts chapter 8. Many people had demons, and he cast spirits out of many of them.

And I think this guy Simon was responsible for all of this, because he was a dealer in witchcraft. He'd been leading them in that. He was responsible for this.

And I think he never dealt with it. And it's possible for a Christian not to be demon-possessed but to have demons in his being somehow. We had a case one time.

This lady told us how her mother had used her as a control medium at the age of 12. And this is what she said to my friend and I. She said, if there's anything occultic, I've done it. But here's an amazing thing.

When she heard the gospel, they couldn't keep her from believing on Christ. But the minute she believed on Christ, an enormous battle started within her and was tearing her apart. She told me she'd often thought of suicide, these demons.

So we made a list, I think 35 things on a list. And then we led her in a prayer. And we tried to get her to pray.

She couldn't pray. She just couldn't open her mouth. So we commanded the demons to loosen their hold, and they did.

And she was set free. And then she followed this in this prayer, renounced all the areas. And you know, the further she got along the list, the louder her voice came.

And at the end, she was just shouting, you know. And she was made gloriously free by the grace of God. Oh, we rejoiced over that.

But she, like Simon, he was in the gall of bitterness, because he hadn't dealt with the occult. So if you've been fooling around with Ouija boards, or talking to the devil, or doing any of that garbage, the Bible says you can't sit, you can't eat at the Lord's table and at the table of demons. You can't drink at the Lord's table and at the table of demons.

You can't do that. You've got to be very careful not to get involved in that kind of stuff. Anyway, don't try and imitate him, as Simon did.

And don't grieve him. Somebody said, you can only grieve love. And Paul reminded Timothy, he said, God hasn't given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound, a disciplined mind.

The spirit that lives in you, if you're a born again believer, is not a spirit of fear. That's a natural thing. He's not a spirit of fear.

The spirit of power, the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, and he will move you to do things to help others, you know. Be like Jesus, who went about, it says, doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil. I think we saw a guy whose ox had fallen down, and go and help him.

He was looking for people that could help, you know. We saw that happen in some meetings we once had, where I preached on this matter of love and action. And that night, people went home after the meeting, and some of them, well the following day, we had a testimony time.

Forty people or more gave their testimony. Things they'd done, people they'd helped. They'd never been doing this before.

And sometimes we Christians, you know, we don't think in terms of helping, because we're looking at the watch, I have to be home in 10 minutes, you know. I don't want to get involved in this, and so we just pass by. And we pass by sometimes great opportunities.

Go and help. They may be smoking cigars, they may be cursing, but they need help. Go and help them.

You might have a chance to talk about the Lord, and it's great. But don't grieve him. Don't grieve him.

I think the most common sin of Christians of the Holy Spirit is simply ignoring him. We just ignore him. We don't have him in our life.

We never think that he's with us, in us, our bodies, this temple. And Paul said that to the Corinthian church. What he said? Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which you have of God? And you're not your own.

You're a bundle of the price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. Well, certainly they knew that.

They'd heard this, but apparently they were acting as if they, well they were just ignoring the Spirit of God. How close can God get? How closer can he get than he has? In him we live and move and have our being. Who did Paul say that to? Do you know? He said to a bunch of heathens at Mars Hill.

In God, he said we live. He said he's not far from every one of us. In him we live and move and have our very existence.

If that's true for everybody, it's certainly more true for us Christians, because not only are we in him, he's in us, which is not in the sinners. So just ignoring the Spirit of God, not really expecting him to bless. You know, if we start each day by asking God to guide you through the day, order my steps in your word and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

That's from Psalm 119. I pray that pretty well every morning to start the day. And I commit the day to God, then ask God to make me sensitive to what he's trying to do that day.

A tract to give out, a word to be spoken, something to be done. Don't ignore him. You'd be like those people of Corinth then.

I went through the books, 1 and 2 Corinthians. You know what I found? I found 30 places where they were disobeying God. Then I found 30 places where they were obeying God.

They were not a backslidden church. They're backslidden people in the church. How could Paul call them a living epistle of Jesus Christ if they were all backslidden? So they're backslidden people in the church.

Problems in the church need to be dealt with. They were forgetting. They were ignoring the Spirit of God and doing their own thing, their own time, their own speed.

You can't operate that way. Remember in the book of Ezekiel, he talks about seeing a wheel within a wheel. The big wheel is Christ.

The little wheel is you and me as Christians. You stay inside the big wheel. The road may be rough at times, but I'll tell you something.

If you get outside the big wheel, it'll be a lot rougher. Stay inside the wheel. Go where he goes.

Let him lead you. Don't complain. And sometimes, maybe, I've seen it, I think, many times, things don't go the way you wanted them to go.

You don't argue. You're just riding in a wheel. He knows where he's going.

And the road's a lot, you know, the ride is a lot easier when you're inside the wheel. And then to get away from that analogy, there's another one over there in Genesis. When Joseph sent to his dad to come to Egypt, it says his heart fainted.

He couldn't believe Joseph was alive. All these years, he thought he was dead. And he's heard from his son in Egypt.

His heart fainted, but it says when he saw something, his heart revived. You remember what that was? They come back. Pharaoh had sent his sons back with wagons to carry Jacob in and all his belongings.

And it says when he saw the wagons, his spirit revived. How does that apply to us? Listen, the wagons represent the promises of God of whom, remember, there are 7,487 promises? They're promises. Now, a wagon is a slow way of moving.

And sometimes promises don't, you know, they don't act in a hurry. And we try to hurry them up. Don't do that.

Abraham and Sarah tried to hurry God up and ran into real problems over that. But they're very safe. They'll get you there.

The promise of God will get you there at God's speed. So what you get rained on, that's no problem. You get hailed on, maybe.

Don't worry about that. You're going to get there because you're in a wagon that God has created. It's one of the things that, you know, you don't have to worry.

You don't have to have a single worry about tomorrow, not even one. Have you ever heard of Sammy Tippett? Yeah, great man, used greatly of God. And I've been reading a book about his life.

And, man, he had some, as you know, very close calls with death, this sort of thing. But he was so committed to God, he didn't worry about that. Long as he was in the center of God's will, he was happy and kept moving in the right direction as God led him.

And so few of us are doing that. Oh, people, we must not continue ignoring the Spirit of God. And then there's simply unbelief, which is related to the other, of course.

There's people who say, you know, poor little me. I'm nothing. I don't know anything.

I've only been a Christian three years, and I don't have much in my head, and I can't remember a Bible verse when I read the Bible. And they keep on saying, poor little me, I can't do anything. It's not.

You're too big to be used. That's the problem, you see. God can't use you.

You're too big to be used. You're lying to God in the gate. Listen, it doesn't matter how little you are, physically or even mentally.

Give God all you've got, and God will multiply it sometimes, you know, a thousand times. A guy named Dallas Billington in Akron, Ohio, years ago he was a worker in a rubber factory. He only had grade five education, and he got saved.

And he met a fellow named Knottly, a Christian, and they got their heads together, and you know what they decided to do? They decided they were going to start a church and build the biggest Sunday school in the world. Okay? Grade five education. When my wife and I were there, now I didn't speak there, I was just there checking it out as a young pastor many years ago.

There were 5,000 in the adult Bible class the morning we were there. They had 18,000 members in the church. Now it's up to 24,000 members, and he's dead now, Dallas is, but his son is one of the five pastors in the church now.

I heard him preach. They said his preaching was like the book of Proverbs. It's all text, no context.

He said things, now listen you people, listen up, and he'd give some great thought. And then he'd get away from that saying, now listen up, and he'd give them some other great thought, you know. So it was just a series of great thoughts, but not connected to anything, you know.

But they told people in Akron, Ohio, if you're sick on a Sunday morning and you need a doctor, just go to the Akron Baptist Temple. That's where all the doctors are. Listen to this guy murder the Queen's English, you know.

Grade 5 education, and no real great intellect. I tell you, it was something to be there. I was mentioning this to a fellow one time.

He said, yeah, Billington put all his eggs in one basket, 18,000 members in one church. That's crazy. I said, listen, I didn't tell you the whole story.

That church, by the time we were there, has started 250 other churches around the country. Every now and then they take 500 people and they start a church. Well, you have 500, that's enough to start a church, of course.

And they're starting churches all over the country. And some of those churches run up into the thousand. I mean, listen, he was a demonstration by God to the world.

You don't have to be a big person. You just have to be a little person given to God. And enlarge your horizons, you know.

We don't like getting outside the boundaries where we feel comfortable. I used to run a canoe camp for teenage kids, and we often went on canoe trips up in the wilderness, and we'd often see bears. And they always ran and hid.

They don't do that today. I don't know why. There's something going on out there.

But anyway, if you're a paddler, you come around a bend in the river, and a bear has just about reached up to the other side. When he sees you coming, he'll turn around and go back to the side he came from. He'll never keep on going the way he was.

You know why? Because he knows it's over there where he came from. He doesn't know it's over here. We're like the bear, you know.

We don't want to get into something we don't understand. And so instead of trusting God and opening the door and going through no matter what, we just chicken out. The spirit you have is a spirit of love and power and a sound, healthy mind.

Let him have his way. You'll never be disappointed. Then sometimes we disturb the spirit of God.

How do we do that? Remember that verse in Ephesians 3, Paul said, for this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you. Accordingly, he spoke about his power there at that point. He would grant you to be strengthened with power by his spirit in the inner man.

Why? That Christ may abide in your heart by faith. I read that and I said to myself, hey, what's this all about? I don't get this. He's writing to Christians and telling them at Ephesus, telling them that he wanted them to have Christ abiding in their heart.

When Christ was already living, they were all Christians, he was writing to. I didn't get it, but I prayed about it. And a year or two later, I was reading a text.

It's a testament by Kenneth Wiest. He's a Greek scholar. And I flipped over and here's what he said at that particular point in Ephesians 3, that Christ may settle down and feel at home in your heart by faith.

Oh, that's different. Abide, that Christ may settle down and feel at home. Listen, does Christ feel at home in your heart? If you're full of anger, full of unbelief, full of loss, lying, hating somebody, refusing to forgive, does Christ feel at home in your heart? He can.

It's impossible. And I've mentioned before about being in a hotel and having a beer parlor underneath my room, you know. You think I felt at home there? I sure didn't, I'm telling you.

The racket, the sometimes dishes being thrown around and fighting and pounding tables and all this garbage, you know. And so people, listen, Christ can't feel at home if I'm walking in sin, if I'm living in sin. How can he feel at home? He can't.

We've told you once or twice about people, I think once at least, about people that got into, you know, pornography and then they claim to be a Christian and trying to justify this. You can never justify pornography, but people try. It simply means you're grieving Jesus Christ.

He can't settle down and feel at home. People say, well, I can't help it. Yes, you can help it.

Well, you can't help it on your own, put it that way, but you can help it by the power of God. You know, this guy, Sam Jones, he was a famous American evangelist, a contemporary of Dwight L. Moody's. They both got great crowds.

If they happened to be through bad planning in the same city at the same time, he used to get bigger crowds than Moody did. And he would twit Moody, he'd say, hey Moody, you can have my overflow. But God used Sam Jones in marvelous ways, you know.

He was just, you know, so many people quit drinking liquor, the brewers got their heads together to try and get out a plan to get rid of this guy. They phoned him and they threatened to dynamite his house. I don't know if they did it by phone or talk to him, but they said, we're going to dynamite your house, and he said, well, go ahead.

He said, you know what, it's just as fast to heaven by the dynamite route as any route I'm acquainted with. They just laughed up and walked away, you know. He was walking down the sidewalk one day and some of these brewers were coming, and one of these guys got converted and he told what happened.

As they saw Sam coming, one of them said, every man's got his price. Let's offer him \$500. Well, that would be like maybe \$4,000 today.

And so they said, Sam, you know, we like the good work you're doing and helping people, and we'd just like to help you. Here's \$500. Thank you, he said, the devil's had it long enough, and he sucked it in his pocket and walked on.

They were furious. He was in Sacramento, California for a crusade. When he got there, the preachers had a meeting with him.

They said, Sam, you can't preach here the way you've been doing in the rest of America. This is the number one hellhole. You know, the underground controls everything.

The cops are immoral. Everything, the prostitutes, it's terrible here. So just tame it down.

He didn't say anything. The first night everybody was over here, this famous evangelist, and he said to the people, now these men, these pastors told me I can't preach here the way I've been preaching all over America. He said, if you think I'm scared, you just don't know Sam Jones.

And he started to preach. In a week, the whole thing got a, there was a revival. Prostitutes got saved.

Policemen got saved. Gangsters got saved. It got as hot as it could get.

And then the preachers heard five men were going down to a hotel this night with pistols to blast them away when he came out of his room. So they went down, got there early, got into Sam's room and said, Sam, we're closing it down. What for? Well, they said there's five men.

We saw them. They're waiting with pistols, each man in his hand. And he said, gentlemen, stand back.

Get out of my way. He started out the door. They saw him coming.

We all got ready. He headed straight for them. He said in telling the story, and they split like the Red Sea split for the rod of Moses and nobody pulled the trigger.

And then he said this, listen carefully. This is important. He said, how in the world can any people, demons or men take my life when God Almighty has something for me to do? I mean, that works for all of us.

How did he die on a train? With his, his song leader was his son-in-law and they were riding along. And then he saw a lady with a man and the man seemed to be very sick looking. And she was crying and he went to ask what the problem was.

She always had a tender heart. And she said, my husband is TB. He's dying.

And we have to get off at the next stop. And we're still 500 miles from home. I don't have a nickel.

I don't have anything on me. I don't know what to do. I don't know where to take him.

He's going to die soon. Oh, he said, honey, listen, I got a lot of money on me. So he took his wallet and gave her everything he had.

They went and sat down beside his son-in-law and died of a heart attack. So he went home doing good. Anyway, remember that no combination of men and demons can take your life as long as Almighty God figures you've got something to do.

Why should we be afraid? Afraid of what? Something to be afraid of the shadow. All right. Don't disturb Christ by thinking evil or being into something that isn't right.

And then don't try to make Him, the Holy Spirit, our servant. And some charismatics did that. You know what happened in this particular case? Now, I'm not saying all charismatics are bad.

They're not. Some of them are soul winners and all of that. There's some things I don't believe that they believe.

But somebody gave a thus saith the Holy Ghost prediction that God was sending a great revival to the British Isles on a certain date. Word spread like wildfire all around their circuits. And thousands went to England at that particular time and had this great meeting where the Holy Ghost was going to come and revive the British Isles.

What happened? They came. The Holy Ghost didn't arrive. It got so bad, finally, they were praying and crying for the Spirit to come, and nothing happened.

And finally, you know what the leader did? He ordered the Holy Ghost to come. And the Holy Ghost didn't come. And the meeting ended.

Many of those people, they forsook that movement. Some people lost their faith in God. It never happened again.

Trying to order the Spirit of God? You can't do that. No, no, no. He's God.

God is a Spirit. They that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Then the last thought here would be blasphemy.

Christ spoke about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. And there's been a lot of disagreement as to what it is. I've made very clear in the Gospel of Mark, made very clear.

Mark 3. He said, the writer says, this thing he said about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will never be forgotten in this world or the next. It says, Jesus said in Mark then, He said this because, because what? Because they said He, Christ, had an unclean spirit. So anybody who says Jesus Christ has an evil spirit, that's blasphemy against God.

There is no forgiveness for that. So that's basically, that is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. I've had people who thought they committed that sin, that needed counseling.

In most cases, they haven't really committed that sin, but they've been disobeying God, I guess, for so long, they were bothered in their, in their conscience. I remember one time, this was sweet, a Mennonite lady, a lovely Christian woman. Everybody that knew her said she's just an absolute wonderful example of Jesus.

But she came to me, she said, you know, I've been a Christian for 14 years and I can't really say I've really had much peace and joy and no power, I never witnessed. She, what's wrong with me? I said, did you ever ask the Lord to fill you with the Holy Spirit? She said, no. Well, I said in Ephesians 5, 18, it says be filled with the Spirit.

That's not an option, it's a command. Oh, no, I've never done that. And so we knelt and she prayed, just quietly asked the Holy Spirit to fill her whole being with himself.

And then when she got there, she stood there, she was speechless for a few moments. And then she said, oh, that was wonderful. And you know, many of us are totally foreign to this.

We're not looking for some big emotional experience. God has many different ways of dealing with people. Some of the most powerful Christian workers never had any big baptism of the Spirit.

They just believed. I read one person, he went forward in a meeting, he was a just an ordinary Christian worker, went forward because the speaker said, if you'd like to be filled with the Holy Spirit, come and kneel at the altar and pray. So he did.

For a while, they went back to his seat. A friend of his sitting behind him said, why did you go forward? He said, I went forward to be filled with the Spirit. Did you receive? He said, yes, I did.

How do you feel? He said, I don't feel any different. I didn't ask for a feeling. I asked to be filled with the Spirit.

But his life from that night was marked by a power that had never been there before. So obviously, something great had happened. But the blasphemy, that's something very, very few people, I think, would ever be guilty of.

But in any case, I remember one time a fellow came to me and said, you guys in the Canadian Environment Fellowship, you're always talking about people being filled with the Spirit. There isn't a single place in the New Testament where Christians said, I am filled with the Spirit. And I said, have you ever read the Old Testament, Mark chapter 3, verse 8? And this was long before Pentecost.

That was Old Testament days, Micah said. But truly, I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord and of judgment and of might to declare unto Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin. I said, brother, listen, if somebody could say that in Old Testament days, can't we say it in New Testament days? No, we can't, certainly.

Then to go back to Luke chapter 11, they said, Jesus teaches to pray. John taught his disciples, teach us to pray. He didn't mean us to memorize the Lord's prayers as it's called, but just it's a pattern we can follow.

I often say, dear God, you know, thy kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Hallowed be your name. I often say that.

Hallowed be the name of God. That's what he had in mind here. But he went into something else and told a story of a man who had some relatives come to his house and he had nothing in the cupboard and he needed.

So he goes to this other guy, his friend, and says, lend me three loaves. A friend of mine, his journey has come to me. I have nothing to say before him.

And he, from within, shall answer and say, no, shut up. The kids are with me in bed. You're disturbing the house.

I cannot rise and give you. And Christ said, now here's, you know, this represents you. I suppose I've told God a thousand times, God, I'm to preach tonight.

I don't have anything to give the people. I'm absolutely empty. I'm nothing.

If you don't come through, I can't even preach. Please give me something. It says, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend.

God and us, God and me, God and your friends. He's our best friend. There's a friend of six closer than brother.

We know who that is. Okay. So we're asking God for some power to help some people to witness.

He says, trouble me not. But it says what? Because of his importunity, he will rise and give him as many as he needs. And then he said this, he applied it.

And I say, and you ask, and shall be given you. Seek and you shall find. Knock and shall be open unto you.

Then he gave three examples following that. Actually, it's be asking, be seeking, be knocking. Don't give up.

I put, you know, ever since the revival in Saskatoon, it was a great time, but it didn't hit the whole of the country. And ever since then, I've been praying night and day for revival to strike Canada, the whole country. I'm expecting that to happen.

It's needed terribly. He said, keep asking, keep seeking, keep knocking and it'll happen. Okay.

So that's what we have to do. And how did he end that? He said, if you then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? You see this guy, he's asking for more of the spirit. And that's what we need.

Dear God, fill me with your spirit so I can effectively live and represent you and talk to others and see people converted. That's what we need. But he says, if you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? We have the spirit, of course, from the moment of conversion.

We're thinking now of a filling of the spirit of God, where God can use us in a significant way. Well, sins against the spirit need to be confessed. He that covers their sins shall not prosper, whoso confesses and forsakes them.

That's in Proverbs 28, I think. If you confess and forsake, you'll be forgiven. It's as simple as that.

So the prayer, remember, search me, not search my wife, search my parents, search my neighbor, whatever. Search me. I know my brother was preaching a revival meeting one time and he suggested to the people that the meeting stop and right now pray and ask God to search your heart and show you the sin that's there.

He said they prayed quietly and suddenly a man gave a shout and he came running down the aisle and he found his face on the floor just trembling. God had shown him his sin. He said it was like looking into hell.

That was unusual. The spirit is willing to do this for us. You can, you know, it says it's vain for you to rise up early and sit up late to eat the bread of sorrows so he gives his beloved sleep.

You can search your heart to a certain point, but not entirely. We need the help of God in this area. God will be honest with you.

You can't be honest with yourself. Your heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? God says, I know it.

So let God search your heart and then do whatever he may ask you to do. Is it money? Sometimes it's money. Don't let that worry you.

Even if it's a big sum of money, God will take care of it. I won't keep you any longer, but I can think of times when we had a need in one case for three thousand dollars and I never had a nickel at the time and God sent it in. Remember the saying, if God knows the need, who else needs to know? Tell God.

Listen, he's your friend, your best friend. But sometimes he says no, and he doesn't mean no, he means come again, you know. So let him have his way.

Holy Spirit of God, we thank you for who you are, what you've done. You convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. You're faithful.

Felix trembled when Paul preached the Word of God and talked about judgment to come. Agrippa believed the prophets. Paul said, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe, but he wasn't saying.

He believed the Bible was true, but he hadn't got the place. I don't think he ever did. There's no historical evidence that he did.

But Father, the Word of God, what a powerful thing applied by the Spirit, what a powerful being. Thank you. Keep us, Lord God, and if we have ignored you or in any way sinned against you, oh God, we know you'll forgive, grant power, we pray, so we can walk in the light, walk in love, and walk in the Spirit.

The three things you told us to do. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

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