

Coming Persecution And The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit (Video)

by Brian Long

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, embracing the vision for the church amidst coming persecution, and seeking the power of the Holy Spirit. It highlights the need to ask Jesus to fill us with His Spirit, run with the vision of the gospel, and engage in fervent prayer to prepare for the challenges ahead.

Scripture: Habakkuk 2:1, Habakkuk 2:14, Matthew 3:11, Ephesians 5:18, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:16, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Hebrews 12:1, Acts 2:20, Revelation 2:13, Revelation 17:6

Topics: "Surrender to God", "Empowerment through the Holy Spirit"

Description

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Transcript

Thank you, Brother Frank, my dear brother. I have that testimony of Algiris written down. I'd actually written down his testimony at home and have it in my study.

It's ministered to me time and time again. The glory of Jesus in the dungeon. And he found infinite sweetness in the bowels of the lion.

I don't think I'll ever forget that expression. Very grateful to be here with you tonight. I do have a burden on my heart that I am convinced, absolutely persuaded is from the Lord.

And I want you to turn with me to the book of Habakkuk, please. Habakkuk and we'll begin in chapter two. My message is a plain vision for the church and coming persecution, a plain vision for the church and coming persecution.

Habakkuk chapter two will begin in verse one. I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart and watch to see what he will say to me. And what I will answer when I'm corrected.

Then the Lord answered me and said, write the vision and make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak and it will not lie. Though it

tarries, wait for it because it will surely come.

It will not tarry. Now, the vision that the prophet Habakkuk saw was a burden from the Lord. You notice if you would in the first verse of chapter one.

The burden which the prophet Habakkuk saw. His burden was a vision from the Lord, a vision that God said would surely come. It wasn't that it might come to pass.

It wasn't that it could come to pass. He said, though it tarries, wait for it because it will surely come. Now, there are two parts to this vision that I want to share with you tonight.

And then having shared the vision to see how we are to run with it, because that's what he says. Write down the vision, make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it. So, first of all, the vision.

What was it that the prophet Habakkuk saw? What was it that God said would surely come? He first saw a vision of coming judgment. It was judgment that was sure to come from the hand of God to Judah. According to the word of the Lord in chapter one, judgment was surely coming.

And the way that God was going to send judgment wasn't exactly what the prophet Habakkuk had in mind or had expected God to answer him this way in his prayer. He had been praying. Verse two, you can see that in chapter one, his prayer.

He says, Oh, Lord, how long shall I cry and you will not hear? Even cry out to you violence and you will not save. Why do you show me iniquity and cause me to see trouble for plundering and violence are before me? There is strife and contention arises. Therefore, the law is powerless and justice never goes forth for the wicked surround the righteous.

Therefore, perverse judgment proceeds. Habakkuk is praying, is interceding for God's people. And he's saying, how long, how long, Lord, how long will the the iniquity, the perversion, the violence, the lawlessness, the injustice in this land continue? How long will you show me all of this trouble in our nation? And yet it seems like you're not doing anything about it.

How long, Lord, will godly people pray for revival? And yet there is no revival. He was crying out to God from an honest heart. He was praying for God to stop the sin and the decay and to stop this dishonor and disgrace that was being brought to the name of God through God's people.

And yet it seemed like God was not answering. How long will godly people pray and there's no revival? And he's begging God to turn God's people back to him in repentance. Brothers and sisters, how long have we prayed the same way? I know I'm not the only one.

How long have we prayed for revival? I remember the first conference that was held here, the burden that I came to Atlanta with, and I was with such expectation that there was a revival conference and I knew some about sermon index, so I knew this is real revival we're talking about and fully expecting that after this conference, we're going to see a great spiritual awakening. How long have we prayed for revival? And yet there is no revival. Granted, God has moved in little pockets around the nation.

He is moving. But I'm talking about spiritual awakening, the kind of revival that turns the whole tide of a nation, you know, a city or even a society. We've not seen that in this nation.

We've not seen anything that compares to the great awakenings of the past, nor of the great revivals like the Welsh revival or the Hebrides revival. We prayed. And yet God hasn't answered like we might have expected him to.

But I want to tell you tonight that God does answer. God has heard those prayers. God heard the prayer of Habakkuk and he answers, maybe not like Habakkuk expected him to answer, maybe not like we expected God to answer, but God speaks.

And here's his answer in verse five. God says, look among the nations and watch, be utterly astounded, for I will work a work in your days which you would not believe, though it were told you. Now, that's that sounds amazing to me when God says, be astounded, I'm going to work a work in your days that you would not even believe, though it were told you.

But the question is, what kind of work? And the next verse, the Lord says, for indeed, I'm raising up the Chaldeans, a bitter and hasty nation which marches through the breadth of the earth to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. I'm going to work a work in your day and here's the work I'm raising up the Chaldeans, who were they? Babylonians. These were not God fearing people.

These were enemies of God, enemy armies that God would sovereignly raise up and use as an instrument of his judgment to chasten his own people. And can you believe it? Can you believe that God would do that? Maybe that's why God said, be utterly astounded, for I will work a work in your day, which you would not believe, though it were told you. Keith Green said several years ago, when God wants to speak to his people, he will do it in three ways.

First, he will touch their economy, he'll touch them where it hurts in their economy. And if that doesn't work, if that doesn't turn God's people to repentance, then he said God will touch their ecology. And then you have floods and pestilences and, you know, hurricanes, a drought this year that's covered a huge part of this nation, tornadoes, hurricanes, tsunamis.

Lastly, though, he said God will raise up a nation to come in and invade them. That is exactly the judgment that God is pronouncing here, and that is the judgment that is soon to come upon this nation and upon North America. God sovereignly raising up enemy armies to invade a nation, and America, this nation believes she's too strong for that, that she could never, her military force is too strong for that, that that could never happen.

I want to tell you tonight that this nation sits on the brink of utter destruction, that she is ripe for the judgment of God. She is ripe for the judgment of God. Judgment is at the door.

America will not have a godly president to save the day nor the nation. National leaders and politicians will become even more corrupt. Muslims and other anti-Christ groups will be God's instrument of judgment.

And what is most surprising of all, probably, is that this holy remnant, and she is found all over the earth, gathered in all different kinds of congregations. But this holy remnant that has seen the king, has come to know Jesus and is following him wholeheartedly, she will be persecuted by a people who profess to be Christians, churches, if you will, persecuting them because they're not pledging allegiance to patriotism or anything else but the Lamb of God. And she will be arrested.

We will be imprisoned, hated, beaten and even executed in this nation. And I want to tell you, brothers and sisters, when it happens, do not think that God's hands are tied. Don't think that this is taken God by

surprise.

God has actually executed the judgment. However and whenever he chooses, we need to see the sovereign hand of God behind it all. I love what the brother said earlier, the lions had to look up.

God here raised up the Chaldeans and God is the God who will allow even his people to suffer at the hands of enemies. His hands are not tied. Judgment is surely coming.

That is a hard message for some to embrace. Habakkuk himself is wrestling with this. He says in verse 12, Are you not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, my holy one? We shall not die.

We shall not die. O Lord, you have appointed them for judgment. O Rock, you have marked them for correction.

You are of pure eyes and to behold evil and cannot look on its wickedness. Why do you look on those who deal treacherously and hold your tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he? Judgment was coming to Judah. Judgment is surely coming to North America.

But I want to remind you again tonight that judgment must begin at the house of God. First Peter, chapter four, verse 17, says, For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God. And if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Habakkuk's question in verse 13 was, Why would God look on those who deal treacherously with his people? Why would he hold his tongue when the wicked devours a person more righteous than he? It's true that the Chaldeans were more wicked than God's own people in Israel.

But it's also true that Israel was sinning against much greater light. Brothers and sisters, the Muslims aren't holding a Bible in their hand, but the prosperity preacher is. The Muslims aren't holding, the world's not holding the Bible, a Bible in their hand.

But I am. And when God's people sin against God, they're sinning against a much greater light than the world or any other religion has. The angry atheist doesn't claim to preach Jesus Christ, nor do they rob from the people of God.

But the wolf in the house of God does. The communist doesn't claim to know Christ, but hypocrites in the house of God do. And God will not always strive with such mixture in his house.

There is coming a shaking. There is coming a sure and definite judgment to the house of God, a shaking where everything that can be shaken will be shaken. And it will bring about a holy separation from those who fear God and those who do not.

Those who know Christ, those who do not, those who have pledged their allegiance to Christ and those who haven't. It is coming. It is coming to the house of God.

God is merciful and he is so patient. He has shown me more mercy than anybody I know. I will never give up on the mercy of God.

But I tell you this, he will not always strive with man. And there is a judgment coming to the house of God. Jesus Christ is the head of the church and he must have the preeminence in all.

It's his church, it's his body, it's his bride. And I tell you that any assembly where Jesus Christ is not truly the head is sliding rapidly to the judgment of God. But here's where we've got to make the vision plain.

We've got to make it personal. Do I honor him as the head of the house? It's not enough for us to memorize scripture that says Jesus Christ is the head of the church. It's not enough for us to know the Bible in our minds that says Jesus must have the preeminence.

The issue is, do I honor him as the head? Not enough to call him king. Do you glorify him as king? Do you obey him as Lord? Do I obey him as Lord? There is hypocrisy in the house of God that comes under the judgment of God. We can preach and before I could ever stand up here, God took me through weeks because I never want to preach something I'm not willing for God to do in and through me.

I've asked myself these questions that I'm posing to you tonight. How many of us listen to so many good messages? We even preach good biblical messages. But the issue is not can we preach them? Not can we listen to many of them? The issue is, do we live them? Are we the incarnation of these messages that we're receiving? There's more preaching today, good preaching, especially on Sermon Index.

All these saints of the past, it's not an issue of how many sermons you listen to. Do you live them? Listen, why do you call me Lord, Lord, Jesus said, and not do the things that I say? Why do you emphatically call me Lord and not obey me to live this way is to build your house on shifting sand and to have it all fall down and blown away in the coming storm. There is lukewarmness in the house of God.

This attempt to serve two masters and it will come under the judgment of God is coming a day where people now are trying to combine allegiances. There will be a shaking. Christ alone or Christ, not at all.

The pride of leaders and pastors who love to have the preeminence will have the rug pulled out from under them very soon, except they repent. Secret sin in the house of God, there's no fear of God and secret sin in the house of God is coming under the judgment of God. Judgment is surely coming upon the American dream message of your best life now.

The word of faith movement, the prosperity gospel, which is another gospel preaching another Jesus, a false gospel that promotes the love of money, self-centeredness and pride. And not only will God demand an account of the deception and dishonor that it is brought to his name in this nation, but he's especially going to demand an account of those who have piped it into nations all across the world and robbed the poor to line their own greedy pockets. That is coming under the judgment of God.

Every house of worship where the Holy Spirit has been rejected, resisted, ignored because we want to have church without him, it's coming under the judgment of God. When the shaking comes, that house will shake and it will not stand. We cannot have church apart from the spirit of the living God, yet he's been grieved, he's been resisted, he's been rejected.

Listen to this scripture from Ezekiel 16, 49. God says, now, this was the sin of your sister Sodom. We think of homosexuality and perversion.

God, that that was an abomination to God. God sent fire and brimstone on Sodom, but that was not the sin he even mentioned here. These were the sins of your sister Sodom.

She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned. They did not help the poor and needy. Arrogance, pride, overfed, we've been given so much and yet unconcerned while the poor and needy die

outside the doors of the house of God.

Have we abandoned our mission, Church of Jesus Christ? Have we forgotten the great commission to go and preach the gospel to every creature? And it's twofold also to make disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey all that Christ has commanded us. Have we forgotten that? Have we forgotten what true religion is in the house of God? Caring for the orphans, the widows in their trouble, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, ministering to the poor, visiting those in prison and keeping yourself unspotted from the world? I tell you, because we have neglected this, we have not taken it seriously. Judgment is coming to the house of God.

It's sure to come, but even that judgment will be an expression of God's mercy and love. The worst thing that could happen today is for God to allow Christendom to continue as she is without him. And there is a clear distinction in first Peter, chapter four, that the Lord makes between the punishing judgment of God upon the unbeliever and the purifying judgment of God upon the believer.

The punishment that will be the judgment that will be punishment for one will be purifying for another. For one, it's punishment and utter destruction. But for the remnant, that shaking, that persecution.

Will be to test and try and refine his holy remnant, his beloved bride, his cherished church. Now, I want you to watch this. Because someone inevitably says a message of gloom and doom, it's not gloom and doom to me.

Gloom to me is for the church to continue as she is. Hypocrisy in the house of God, hypocrisy in my heart, that's gloom. This is not a message of gloom and doom, and this vision of judgment is not all that the prophet saw.

He did see judgment coming. He saw the suffering of God's people coming. But that's not all he saw.

God says to the prophet Habakkuk, write down the vision and make it plain. Habakkuk, what do you see? I see judgment that is sure to come. Persecution, yes.

Incredible suffering of God's people, yes. A storm unlike we have ever experienced before, yes. But that's not all I see.

Chapter two, verse 14, surrounded by verse after verse after verse of coming judgment. There's this little nugget, like a nugget of gold hidden inside the side of a mountain. Habakkuk 2.14, for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

What do you see Habakkuk? Coming judgment. But wait, I see something else. I see a coming glory, a glory that is so great that the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth even as the waters cover the sea.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. As the waters cover the sea.

Now, where do the waters not cover the sea? Seas make up the waters. In other words, there's no place on earth where the glory of the Lord will not be known. Have you seen that, saints, through the eyes of faith? A coming glory that is a latter glory that was greater than the former.

That is the greatest display of God's glory that has ever been known in the history of the world. A coming glory where the knowledge of that glory will cover the earth even as the waters cover the sea. Why?

Because in the fires of persecution, the church gets purified.

Yes, all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, but suffering for Christ and the sake of Christ always precedes glory. Suffering for Jesus equals glory to Jesus. Paul, the apostle, says in Romans 8, verse 16, The spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. Suffering, glory. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Suffering with Jesus precedes the glory of Jesus and his glory will be revealed. Where? According to Romans 8, in the heavens somewhere, among the stars, in some cathedral temple somewhere. We have to go find that man made.

No, where? In us. The glory of the Lord revealed in us. How? Through suffering.

Through persecution, Habakkuk sees something else in verse 20 of chapter two, but the Lord is in his holy temple, he says. The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him and the Lord beloved in his holy temple through his holy temple will display his glory.

And the knowledge of that glory will cover the earth even as the waters cover the sea. You remember under the old covenant when God chose to reveal his glory in the days of Moses, he commanded Moses to build a tabernacle. Moses built the tabernacle just as God had told him to do, and in that tabernacle, in the holy of holies, the Shekinah glory of God would come down.

God's glory would rest among his people. God would visit his people in the tabernacle, the glory of the Lord displayed in the holy of holies, and everybody who was there knew that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, he is God. The glory of the Lord.

But that tabernacle one day was no more. And King David had a deep desire in his heart to build a house for the Lord, a temple for the most high God. And God honored that request in David, but he said, David, you're not going to build me the house.

Your son, Solomon, will build my temple. And King Solomon did build, he built an incredible, magnificent, beautiful temple for the Lord. And you remember what happened when Solomon finished dedicating the temple to God in prayer, the glory of the Lord came down so much so that the priest could not even enter the temple, but down on their faces they went on the pavement and they worshiped God.

And what did they say? For he is good and his mercy endures forever. And that display of God's glory was greater than the former in the tabernacle. God manifested his presence, God displayed his glory, his glory came down and was revealed through the temple.

But that beautiful, magnificent temple of Solomon's was also destroyed. And God's people were taken captive for 70 years to Babylon. But God then raises up a remnant.

God always has a remnant. And the remnant marched to Zion, back to Jerusalem to once again build a temple for the Lord at the command of the Lord. They were few in number, but they were one in purpose, one in vision.

They'd come to build the house of the Lord so that the Lord could visit his people. Another place for the glory of the Lord to rest, to come down among his people that all may know that he is God. And God said this, though that outward temple wasn't as spectacular as the previous temple, Solomon's temple.

Yet God said, I will fill this temple with my glory and the latter glory will be greater than the former glory. And what happened? Was it greater? It was greater because one day the son of God himself stepped down and he walked into that temple and he opened up the scriptures and he read. And Jesus Christ stood in the temple and the word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And John said, we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. God once again filled his house with glory. And that glory was much greater than any of the former glory, because this is the son of God himself, Jesus Christ.

Displaying, seeing the glory of God in the face of Jesus, we beheld his glory. But our Lord went to the cross, died on the cross for our sins, was raised again on the third day, ascended into heaven. He's now seated at the right hand of the Father.

That temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D., not one stone found left upon another. And I still hear the spirit of the Lord say, heaven is my throne. And the earth is my footstool, where is the house that you will build for me? Where is the place of my rest? God longing to visit his people.

Where is the place once again where God will display his glory? Habakkuk said, I see the Lord in his holy temple, let all the earth be silent. And through that holy temple, the knowledge of his glory covers the earth, even as the waters cover the sea. But where is that temple? Stephen said in Acts chapter seven, the Most High no longer dwells in temples made with human hands.

Where is that temple? And the answer resounds to the Apostle Paul, first Corinthians chapter three, verse 16. Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him for the temple of God is holy. Which temple you are? The prophet says, I see the Lord in his holy temple and the Apostle Paul says, yes.

The temple of God is holy and which temple you are. You see it, brothers and sisters, that's the vision. The vision of God's coming glory is the coming of the greatest display of the glory of God ever in the history of the world.

I want to tell you that this is the church's finest hour. I believe it with all of my heart. We are living in incredible days.

God Almighty wanting to display his glory once again to such a degree that glory will be greater than the former glory. It has to be if the knowledge of his glory covers the earth, even as the waters cover the sea. And he wants to do it where? Through his church, through his body, through his temple, which is us.

Coming judgment, yes. Coming persecution, yes. Suffering, yes.

But a glory of God and to God that makes it all worth it. I agree with the Apostle Paul, the sufferings of this present time are not even worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. There's the vision, but how do we run with it? He says, write the vision, make it plain on tablets that he may run who reads it.

And in other words, do something with this vision. It demands a response, a practical response. Run with the vision.

And someone who is running is either running away from something or they are running in pursuit of something. And I want to say to you tonight to run with this vision is to run in pursuit. Not of something, but someone.

Hebrews chapter 12, if you turn there with me. Hebrews chapter 12 and verse one, run with the vision, but how? Run pursuing someone. Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us.

And let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. This is a pursuit, namely of Jesus Christ himself. You want to run with the vision, pursue Christ with all your heart.

Fix your eyes on Christ, the author and finisher of our faith. Let Jesus fill your vision. Go after him.

Let him be your chief delight, your highest ambition, your most passionate pursuit. Your greatest desire should be the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Otherwise, you're not running the race and you're not running with the vision.

So make it plain, make it personal. How is it with you? What is your greatest passion? What's your most passionate pursuit? What do you talk about the most? Who do you talk about the most? Jesus Christ or your Bible translation. Jesus Christ or your particular doctrine, theology, eschatology.

Jesus Christ. Or your ministry. Jesus Christ or your gifts.

Jesus Christ or your head covering. Jesus Christ or your children, your family. Jesus Christ or your denomination.

It can be a number of things, brothers and sisters, and they're not all bad, but nothing. Everything should pale in comparison of love for him. Love for Christ, the pursuit of Christ.

I'll tell you this remnant that God is raising up that is scattered all over the earth. She has one thing in common to you who believe he is precious. Christ is precious.

Hallelujah. And when he's precious to you like that, you are willing to suffer the loss of everything and to count it but dumb rubbish for the sake of knowing Christ more. Seeing him and there's so much more of Jesus to know that I know and then, you know.

Are you willing? Are you willing to suffer the loss of all things? For the sake of him, knowing him, following him. Being closer to him, Algeria said in that dungeon, the one who I once followed afar, I now see he holds my hand, he's with me. When Christ is everything to you, something else happens.

You run with this vision in pursuit of Christ. Something else happens. You will hate sin with a passion.

You will loathe it. You will hate it with the passion. Notice, he says in verse one, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that's a besetting sin, the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run again.

The Lord made so clear to me, make this plain. Is there sin in your life? Make it personal. Is there sin in your life? Are you regarding iniquity in your heart? When Christ is precious to you, you will hate sin.

You will get dead serious about repentance, not just confessing your sin, but forsaking it. I was walking this trail, I always walk to pray the other day and the Lord was showing me, to you who believe he's precious, blessed are the pure in heart, worshiping Jesus. I'm walking along and someone's dog had vomited right there in the middle of the trail.

I looked at that, obviously, you repulse by that. And the Holy Spirit reminds me, that's what sin looks like to me. And I said, Jesus, make sin look like that to me.

Repulsive. This pursuit of Christ is a pursuit of holiness. And remember, brothers and sisters, without holiness, no one will see the Lord.

The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth be silent. But not just running now, we're running in pursuit of Christ.

When you're running in pursuit of him with this vision, you're running on purpose. First Corinthians chapter nine. Look at this one with me.

First Corinthians chapter nine and verse twenty four. Again, the apostle Paul says. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

In other words, run to win. Run on purpose. The apostle Paul ran with purpose, he says in verse twenty five, everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things.

Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore, I run thus, not with uncertainty, thus I fight, not as one who beats the air, but I discipline my body and bring it into subjection. Lest when I preach to others, I myself should become disqualified.

He ran on purpose and Paul was so concerned about coming to the end of his race and finding out that he had run it in vain. He was so adamant that he would not run this race in vain. He would not be distracted from his purpose.

He's running with the vision. His eyes are on Christ. He disciplined his body.

He didn't let food and sleep and leisure and entertainment master him, nor distract him from this vision of Christ. He wouldn't be distracted from what Christ had clearly called him to do. He wouldn't waste time.

He wouldn't become spiritually lazy. I get embarrassed of myself when I'm talking about persecution. I'm reading Foxe Book of Martyrs and all of this.

And I see a spiritual laziness that I'm prone to in areas of my life where I'm not dying now. There's a lot of spiritual laziness and undisciplined in the house of God. Are we running on purpose? Are we running to win with our eyes fixed on Christ? He wouldn't stray from his purpose.

And what was his purpose? Verse 23, Now this I do for the gospel sake. That's my purpose. And he wouldn't stray from it.

Paul was passionate and determined not to run in vain. His purpose was the gospel. He wouldn't waste time.

He took every open door, every opportunity that he had, everywhere the spirit led him. He was sitting on ready to preach the gospel. He said, I'm not ashamed of the gospel.

My son, Luke, the other day reminded me of a quote that he'd read by D.L. Moody. Moody said, I don't find anywhere where God says that the world is going to grow better and better. I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel.

And God has given me a lifeboat and said to me, Moody, save all you can. And you know, Moody didn't stray from that purpose. Brothers and sisters, you and I have a purpose and it has to do with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Are you running with it? The messenger who runs with the vision is a messenger who is running with good news. Christ died for our sins. He rose from the dead.

He lives and he's coming again. Repent and believe the gospel. That's the man, that's the woman, that's the child of God is running on purpose.

They have not lost sight of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. So I want to ask you again, what are you doing with the news that has been placed in your hands? Are you running with the vision? Have you gotten away from the true gospel of Jesus Christ? He came to save souls, to seek and to save that which was lost, the sins of Sodom again. I tell you, the poor needy were dying outside her doors and she was unconcerned.

And any Christianity that doesn't carry the compassion of Christ for the lost. Is a dead religion, it's not true Christianity. Get back to your calling, brothers and sisters, who are you praying for that's lost? Who are you reaching out to with the gospel of Jesus Christ? Who are you discipling? There is at least one person who is younger in the faith than you are that you can disciple.

If you know, if you do not know one, you need to pray for someone, lead them to Christ and disciple them. Get back to your purpose. Get back to your calling.

What is God called you to do? Get back to it. Don't stray from your purpose. Run on purpose.

Why? Because one day, very soon, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ and we will give an account to what we have done in this body. Did I run on purpose? Pity the man, God forbid you come to the end of the race, you see the glory of Jesus, you stand at the judgment seat of Christ and it suddenly revealed to you, you ran in vain. You wasted time.

You went this way, that way, the other. You didn't run on purpose when you run pursuing Christ, you run on purpose. That purpose is the gospel.

Can I tell you another purpose that all of us, it's a God given purpose given to all of us who are believers. Prayer. You run with this vision by prayer in everything by prayer.

Listen carefully to a verse that that the spirit of God has arrested my heart with here recently, continues to bring it back to my remembrance. Seems like every day now, first Peter chapter four, verse seven. But the end of all things is at hand.

The end of all things is at hand. If the apostle Peter said that when the spirit of God moved him to write this, how much closer are we to the end of all things? The end of all things is at hand. Therefore, be serious and watchful in your prayers because the end of all things is at hand.

Get serious about prayer. Get back to our knees, get back to our purpose. Church, my house shall be called a house of prayer.

The prayerless church will not be ready for this soon coming storm. I assure you. The most effective ministry and preparation we have is prayer.

Our Lord Jesus commanded it. Not only that, he set the example for us, the most trying hour ever that the Lord faced on this earth was in that dark night in Gethsemane. When the cross was set before him, but it wasn't just the physical cross.

The cup was set before him. And that cup meant he would take upon himself the sins of the whole world in that cup was the wrath of God. Talk about a crisis hour.

Talk about a difficult hour that none of us can even come close to understanding or comprehending. How would he prepare for it? Let's follow in his steps. How did he prepare? He went to prayer and he says to his disciples, you stay up and stay awake with me, watch and pray, because they were also about to face a very difficult, trying, testing time hour that was set before them.

The only way for you to be prepared is pray, stay awake and pray. Jesus, when a little father fell on his face and prayed. Comes back and he finds his disciples sleeping, wakes them up again, goes back and prays again so fervently that he sweats, as it were, great drops of blood.

He prayed and he prayed and he prayed. When the hour came, he was prepared. His disciples slept when they should have been praying.

And what is the result? One denies him, one betrays him, and they all forsook him and fled. How will you stand in the coming persecution when you're prayerless, the prayerless church will not stand in the coming storm? I assure you, the most single, most vital, important meeting of the church is the prayer meeting. I believe that I'm 100 percent persuaded of that, and I'm not just preaching it, that's what we live in Barnsdall.

Why? Because we've seen with nothing without God. We started in a barn coming together, saying, what are we going to do, brother Brian? I don't know. Down to our knees and we pray and we've never lost sight of that Saturday night prayer, prayer meeting, and nothing can substitute that.

There's nothing more important. I feel tonight as the richest man on the face of the earth. You know why? Because I have a little flock in Barnsdall who right now, they're not listening to the message, they're watching it, the volumes down, they're praying corporately.

Brother Brian, we're going to pray for you until it goes off air. We're not going to stop praying. But they didn't just start tonight, nor did they start today.

Sunday morning, I'm finished preaching. One brother stands up and says, this is what we're going to do. You remember when brother Brian's son was sick, fighting cancer? God taught us how to fast and pray.

Brother Brian's going to Atlanta Thursday. We're starting to fast and pray. Who will take the first hour? Who will take the second hour? One hand goes up one after another.

And from Thursday around the clock, 24 hours all the way up to tonight, somebody has been praying for this conference and for me. Glory to God. That means more to me than anything.

They told me that I went to thank them and broke down, weeping, couldn't contain myself. That's the greatest gift any preacher, any pastor could ever have. But why? It's because God has revealed to us in everything by prayer.

Such a small flock, such. We have two prayer meetings on Saturday night, small prayer meetings, small people, nobodies. But a great big God shows up every time at prayer meeting.

Sometimes you have to pray through, but he comes and the result. Sinners have come to Christ as a result of calling upon God on Saturday night, they've come to Christ on Saturday morning as a result of that prayer meeting, marriages have been restored, relationships have been reconciled, people have been healed miraculously by God. Most of all, God manifests his presence on Sunday.

He meets with us. He continues to surprise us week after week after week. Brothers who are now standing in the pulpit and preaching, if you would have told them a year ago they'd been preaching, nobody would have believed you.

That's what God does when his people pray. The only the greatest way to prepare, the greatest preparation we have for persecution or anything for that matter, is to call upon the Lord in prayer, pray. Make the vision plain, make it personal.

So I ask you very plainly, very straightforwardly, are you part of a vibrant prayer meeting right now, at least once a week? Are you part of a prayer meeting? If not, why not? You know what the Lord show me, brothers and sisters, this coming persecution, it's not enough that I stand. Do we have any kind of love for our brothers and sisters? It's not enough that I stand. My brother, he must stand.

I want him to stand. I want my sister to stand. They denied Christ.

They fell asleep instead of praying. We have got to stay on our knees and see our dependence upon God and pray together. Are you part of a prayer meeting? If not, you need to start one.

Somebody says, I can't find anybody to pray with me. You start one. I assure you, God has seven thousand that have not bowed their knee to bail and you need to find them.

Ask him for one, two, just one or two to join with you. If they won't join right away, you start the prayer meeting and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will show up and meet with you in that prayer meeting and he will draw one or two. Start the prayer meeting and let nothing take it, substitute it, nothing at all.

That's one meeting we will not miss. Do you have to miss Sunday morning? So be it. Wednesday, so be it.

Do not miss Saturday night. And they don't want to miss Saturday night. They saw God bring my son through cancer again, totally healed from calling upon the Lord.

That's the Lord's doing. Miraculous testimonies that God has done in people's lives. Are you part of a prayer meeting? Get serious about prayer, because without it, and this is why I'm coming to the final part

of running with the vision, without it, there is no power.

Prayer precedes the power of the Holy Spirit, the power of God. And I want to tell you, we must have the power of the Holy Spirit. Self-confidence, grit teeth, sheer determination and even sincere promises will all falter and fail in the coming storm and persecution.

But those who have waited upon the Lord in prayer, who put no more confidence in the flesh. Who have believed and received the promise of the father who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, they will not waver, they will be his witnesses, they shall prophesy, they shall preach boldly, they shall praise the Lord at all times. And through them, that holy remnant, the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will fill the earth even as the waters cover the sea.

What sets them apart? The same thing that set the apostles in that early church apart, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of the living God will be with them, in them and upon them. And I know, believe me, I know there is so much of the counterfeit of the baptism of the Holy Spirit today. There is an overwhelming abundance of the counterfeit of the baptism in Christendom today.

And there are others who simply resist and reject and ignore any work in ministry of the Holy Spirit altogether. Those who are even afraid to say baptism of the Holy Spirit. I don't want to join or be a part of either group.

And I'm not saying that condescendingly, I used to be in one of those groups. But I don't want to be a part of either one, join either one, and I'm not afraid either to say baptism of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because that is the promise of the father.

Speaking of Jesus, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire, that is what I want, that is what I need, and not in a continual filling of the spirit of God continually. The promise is for you and your children and as many as the Lord our God shall call and the evidence. So many would disagree on the evidence, brothers and sisters, let's just come back to Acts 1 8, the words of Jesus, and you shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses.

What is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Power to become holy because he's the Holy Spirit. Power to be witnesses of Christ. And you know better than I, because I don't know Greek, but I know this Greek word witnesses.

Is what? Martus, same word for martyrs, same word in other parts, in other places in the scripture where they actually use the word martyr. Acts chapter two, verse 20, the apostle Paul speaking of the Stephen and he says the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed. Martus, same word for witnesses.

Revelation chapter two, Jesus speaking of Antipas. He says Antipas, my faithful martyr, Martus, witness martyr. Revelation 17, Babylon was drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Witnesses, martyrs, a holy people endued with power from on high who did not love their lives to the death. How you tell me, how did that great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us? Some of them sawed in two. Some of them ripped apart by lions in an arena as a crowd cheered and jeered and mocked, some of them burned at the stake, never denied Christ, never stopped loving their enemies, never stopped preaching, never stopped praising the Lord in the midst, even while their bodies burned, never stopped praising the Lord.

How? Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. That's the only way, brothers and sisters. How did Vibia Perpetua, 22 year old mother, had her baby boy taken away from her, thrown into prison, thrown into an arena with wild beasts and finally was martyred at the end of the sword of a gladiator in that arena.

But while she was laying there before she died, cried out, give out the word. Stand fast in the faith, love one another, and don't let our suffering become a stumbling block to you. How did a 22 year old mother do that? Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord.

She was filled with the Holy Spirit. There's no other way. Alan Cameron, a Scottish Covenanter, while being held in prison, they bring to him the head and the hands of his son.

And they cruelly asked him if he knew them. He said, yes, I know them. I know them as he kissed them.

They are my sons, my own dear sons. It is the Lord, good as the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me nor mine, but has made goodness and mercy to follow us all of our days. How did he do it? Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord.

You must be filled with the Holy Spirit. We must be endued with the power from on high. We need the spirit of the living God.

Brothers and sisters, what do we do about our lack of love? Our lack of faithfulness, our lack of wholeheartedness, our lack of boldness, our lack of holiness, our lack of joy, our lack of prayer, our lack of power and witness. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord, I want to plead with you, making this vision plain, put away the modern books on the Holy Spirit. I walk into a Christian bookstore today and get nauseated, there's nothing, put away the modern books on the Holy Spirit, even turn off the computer, set aside the CDs, pick up this book, read the book of Acts one more time.

And better yet, read it in one setting, at the most two settings and do as I have done myself, read the book of Acts and ask, what is missing in my life? What is missing in the church today? What is missing? This is it. You must be filled with the Holy Spirit. You must be endued with power from on high.

That's what I want, not what you're seeing around. What did Jesus have? What did the apostles have? What did the early church have? That's what I want. And that's the answer to our lack.

So I simply want to ask you. If you're thirsty. If you're serious about coming to Jesus for cleansing and freedom from all sin.

If you're willing to be broken bread and poured out wine. To serve others, he's not going to fill anybody that's all about themselves, full of themselves, not willing to be poured out. If you're willing to be broken bread and poured out wine, you're thirsty, you're serious about coming to Jesus for cleansing and freedom from all sin.

If you're willing to surrender all to Jesus and you simply ask him in faith, he will fill you with the Holy Spirit. You willing to obey every word he says, he will fill you with the Holy Spirit. And regardless of what your doctrine or your teaching is, no God fearing Bible believing blood bought saint of God can ignore, neglect the command of Ephesians 5 18, which says clearly, do not be drunk with wine where it is excess, but be filled with the Holy Spirit continually.

Be ye being filled. That is a command and we cannot ignore it. And the result, Ephesians 5, 19, speaking to one another in Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing, making melodies, music in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks to the Lord, the God, the Father, always for everything in Christ Jesus.

What I'm saying to you is someone who is filled with the Holy Spirit will praise the Lord at all times. They will sing to him. They will praise him.

They will worship him at all times. And I want to tell you, brothers and sisters, we're not called in these days just to hold down the fort. No, you're not called to go stack up food and hide somewhere right now.

We're called to go in the power of the Holy Spirit on purpose, reaching the lost world, making disciples, joining the Lord Jesus in building his church, because it's through that temple that the glory of the Lord will cover the earth even as the waters cover the sea. I come to a close, Habakkuk, back to Habakkuk. I want you to see this as we close, that there is a progression in the book of Habakkuk, only three short chapters.

In chapter one, he's wrestling with the vision. In chapter two, he receives the vision. In chapter three, he's running with the vision.

Chapter one, he's and just as you and I must move from Romans six to Romans seven to Romans eight. We must also move from Habakkuk one to Habakkuk two to Habakkuk three, there's a progression. He's wrestling with the vision.

The suffering, the persecution, judgment to come, but ultimately he's wrestling with the God who is calling his people to suffer. Habakkuk's very name means wrestle or embrace. Number one, are you willing to embrace a God who calls you to martyrdom? Are you willing to embrace a Christ who calls you to take up a cross and die for his glory? That's the only true and living Christ there is.

If any man be my disciple, let him take up his cross daily, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me. Some of you may be wrestling right now. Habakkuk says we shall not die.

Yes, and you need to make the resolve if you're wrestling. Lord, by faith and by your grace, I'm willing to embrace the cross, get on the cross, die to this self life because I want nothing more than you and you glorified. Chapter two, he receives the vision, that vision is in the midst of all this suffering again, the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covering the earth, even as the waters cover the sea, the Lord in his holy temple, he receives that by faith.

God wants to glorify himself through his church, receive that vision. But in chapter three, he runs with it. And how does he run with it? Chapter three is an entire chapter of prayer.

It's Habakkuk's prayer. But even in this prayer, there's a progression. The prayer begins in verse two with.

Oh, Lord, I've heard your speech and was afraid. Oh, Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years. In the midst of the years, make it known in wrath, remember mercy.

We pray you run with the vision by prayer, but don't give up on the mercy of God. Judgment has to come to the house of God in wrath. Remember, mercy still pray for the mercy above all mercy upon us and mercy upon never his mercy endures forever.

Never let go of the mercy of God in wrath. Remember, mercy never let go of praying. God, revive your work, revive that.

Yes, this is revival. But yes, it means persecution in the fires of persecution. The church gets purified.

But this prayer progresses its petition now. But what happens as he prays, like always happens if you really pray, he now sees the Lord. And once he sees the Lord, there's no more perplexity.

There are no more questions. There's no more wrestling. He sees the Lord.

He comes to the end of the chapter and he says this verse 17, though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit beyond the vines, though the labor of the olive may fail and the fields yield no food, though the flock may be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation.

The Lord God is my strength. He will make my feet like deer's feet and he will make me walk on my high heels. The progression from petition to praise, and this is the remnant God is raising up in spite of circumstances, in the midst of persecution, in the midst of pain, in the midst of suffering.

Praise the name of the Lord with all of your heart, because he's worthy of praise. No more questions because he's not looking at the Chaldeans now. He sees God.

He doesn't see the persecutors anymore, but but the Lord, his eyes are upon the Lord. When will the glory of the Lord cover the earth as the waters cover the sea? When his people rise up in the power of the Holy Spirit to praise him at all times. Brothers and sisters, let's make that let's run with the vision.

Let's run with the vision. Let's pursue the person of Jesus Christ with a passion unlike we've ever pursued him before. You're willing to suffer the loss of everything to gain him, to know him more.

Let's run on purpose. Let's run on purpose with this message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Join with someone building the body, the true body of Christ, making disciples, preaching the gospel, run on purpose, start the prayer meeting, start praying, get to prayer, run on purpose, seek God to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And I simply want to ask you plainly tonight, if you're one like myself who has seen your lack, you see your need. And even tonight, you say the Holy Spirit's been speaking to you. You say, God, I need you to fill me afresh with your Holy Spirit.

Baptize me with your spirit. Baptize me with your presence, with your love. Lord God, all of you, I want more of you.

The Holy Spirit always glorifies Christ, more of you, Jesus, more of you fill me, Lord. You don't have to wait for weeks. I don't believe that if you meet the conditions, you're thirsty.

Jesus said out of your innermost being will flow rivers of living water. I simply want to ask you to join me in asking God to do something within our own hearts . And joining the Apostle Paul in that prayer of his and Ephesians three that says, God, just strengthen us with power by your spirit in our innermost being. Let the rivers of living water flow for your glory.

Fill us with all the fullness of God so that we can love our enemies, so that we can preach the gospel with power and anointing so that we can praise you at all times in the midst of every circumstance. Fill us with the Holy Spirit. That is my prayer.

And if that is your desire tonight, that is your prayers. We enter into a time of worship. I want to invite you to come to the altar.

You cry out to God, you pray, you cry out to God. This is my need. Here is my lack.

Lord, you gave a promise. This is the promise of the father. You said it's for me, for my children, for as many as you shall call.

I'm simply coming. Brothers and sisters, as we heard already, if you being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly father give the Holy Ghost to those who ask him? He will is more willing to give than you are to receive. If you're willing to meet those simple requirements, I'm thirsty.

Jesus, I come to you first for cleansing. I'm willing to surrender all I'm willing to be poured out, I'm willing to go wherever you tell me to go, do whatever you tell me to do. Say whatever you tell me to say.

I'm going to take you at your word and your promise. Fill me with the Holy Spirit. And I believe we shall go out of this place and the power of the Holy Spirit.

And one of the evidences of that will be we will be a people who praise the Lord at all times, in every circumstances, even if the fig is a fruit is not on the vine and the fig tree doesn't blossom and there's no cattle in the stalls. We will rejoice in the Lord. Amen.

Please stand to your feet as we pray. Brother Dave, you just lead us brother out in praise and worship and allow us a time not to rush in the presence of God, but to praise him, to call upon him in prayer. And brothers and sisters, when you know God has answered your prayer, rise to praise him, praise him tonight with all of your heart.

Father, I ask you in the name of Jesus. To do what only you can do, no man. Can impart anything, God, apart from you, we come to you, we come directly to you, our father and our God, the one we can call Abba, cry out to you, Abba, father, we come to you tonight, father.

And you know, the condition of each and every heart here tonight, you know, the condition of each and every heart that's who's listening online. Perhaps there are people right in their own houses right now who have seen their lack, seen their need, their desperate need to be filled, baptized with the Holy Spirit. Would you meet us tonight, father? We don't have time to waste.

We don't have games to play. We don't have to figure it all out or explain it all. It's very simple.

We lack. We can do nothing apart from you. You made a promise and we come to you tonight, father, to fill us afresh with your Holy Spirit.

Would you do that, father, as we enter into a time of worship and praise? And I pray, God, that tonight you'd pour out upon us a spirit of praise that we would go forth praising your glorious, magnificent name, the name of Jesus, the name that is above every other name. We love you, Lord, and we glorify you tonight in Jesus name. Amen.

If you'd like to come to the altar or pray where you are, feel free. Jesus is.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/hfV9YHq9p3Q.mp4>

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